

# San Mateo County Fire Service POLICIES AND STANDARDS MANUAL

## **Title: Rapid Intervention Crew**

Policy No. 2000-10

Adopted 10/03/00

Revised

11/24/09

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide additional safety for firefighters at emergency incidents by designating one or more companies as Rapid Intervention Crews (RIC's) to provide immediate rescue or other assistance to firefighters.

### **Policy:**

It is the policy of the San Mateo County Fire Chiefs that incident commanders establish RIC's as outlined by this policy.

### **References:**

- FIRESCOPE
- NFPA 1500: Health and Safety Program, part 204.2.
- ICS – 910 Firefighter Incident Safety and Accountability Guidelines
- Phoenix Fire Department SOP Manual 2,  
[WWW.Phoenix.gov/FIRE/forefiredepts.html](http://WWW.Phoenix.gov/FIRE/forefiredepts.html)

### **Background:**

Incidents where Firefighters have been lost or trapped remind the fire service of the need for rapidly-deployable teams to affect an immediate rescue of trapped or missing firefighters. The "Rapid Intervention Crew" concept has been developed to meet this need, regardless of the size of the event.

### **Procedure:**

#### I. DEFINITIONS:

1. RIC: An ICS term for the Rapid Intervention Crew. RIC's consist of a company or companies whose purpose is to rescue trapped or lost firefighters.
  - Initial RIC response unit: The initial RIC is the engine company designated by CAD and dispatched to the scene with the specific purpose of filling the RIC component at an incident. This engine company shall be assigned from a predetermined list of engine companies that carry the minimum equipment identified in appendix "1" of this procedure.
  - The initial RIC response unit shall be the closest predefined RIC engine company that is not part of the suppression units in the first alarm assignment. CAD will fill suppression assignments first. CAD will then select the next due engine company that is RIC capable from station ordering and assign that engine to fulfill the RIC assignment.

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- Additional RIC companies shall be assembled from engine and/or truck companies at the incident. These companies shall gather the required equipment from RIC equipped apparatus on scene if the equipment is not carried on their apparatus.
2. RIC Group Supervisor (RGS): The RGS is the assigned to supervise the Rapid Intervention Crew/Crews. The IC may assign the second due B/C on the 1<sup>st</sup> alarm as the RIC Group Supervisor. This B/C may also be assigned to another ICS position that may help avoid a RIC Deployment. All Chief Officers shall carry the County Authorized RIC Group Supervisor and Air Management Worksheets in the event they are assigned to manage a RIC Deployment.
  3. RIC Component: The RIC Component is the portion of an alarm that is designated to fulfill the RIC assignment. The full RIC component shall consist of a RIC company and a Chief Officer, with a Chief Officer assigned to RGS by the IC from 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm Chief Officers. The RGS role may also be assigned to the Incident Safety Officer in the event of a deployment prior to the assignment of a RGS.
  4. Standby TAC Channel: A tactical radio channel reserved for tactical operations in the event of a RIC deployment. The County Communications Plan designates TAC-55 as the assigned countywide Standby TAC Channel.

## II. DISPATCH

1. A RIC Component can be dispatched in one of three ways:
  - A RIC will be included as part of all Structure Fire assignments.
  - Any non-Structure Fire assignment when elevated to a second alarm will have a RIC Component in the second alarm response.
  - Any incident where the IC determines that a RIC response is appropriate, the call will be balanced to a Structure Fire assignment by PSC, which will include the RIC component.

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### III. PRE-DEPLOYMENT

The following procedures will be followed when the RIC engine arrives on scene:

1. Upon arrival the Company Officer is to contact the IC via radio and announce "Engine "X" on scene, establishing RIC." RIC Companies shall maintain their unit designators.
2. Unless otherwise directed by the IC or RGS (if established), the RIC shall cache out their equipment in proximity to the primary entry points of the structure. In the case of a High-Rise Incident, the RIC shall be located in an appropriate location no lower than two floors below the fire floor.
3. The RIC Officer shall ascertain the location and assignment of companies on the incident in order to be better prepared for a RIC deployment. The RIC Officer shall also size-up the building and the fire conditions and request additional RIC Companies if desired.
4. The RIC and/or RGS shall take measures to "soften" the building. The tasks associated in softening the building can be done by the RIC if the performance of these tasks doesn't significantly impair their ability to deploy. Where practical, doors should be left open to provide an emergency escape route unless doing so will have a negative effect fire conditions. Target Exit Devices (e.g. portable lights, portable strobes, etc.) should be placed just inside near the base of the open doors. The doors must remain unlocked. In all cases, these secondary assignments to support the RIC Operation shall be managed through Division and Group Supervisors working in conjunction with the Incident Commander.
5. In no case shall the RIC be assigned to or engage in routine firefighting activities that are not directly related to RIC operations. The RIC assignment shall be maintained. Additional resource needs for the incident shall be filled with companies from Staging.
6. If not previously established, the IC shall assign a RGS no later than the arrival of units from a second alarm.
7. The RGS and/or RIC Officer shall consult the Pre-Deployment Checklist on the RGS Worksheet and take appropriate actions when necessary.

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8. The RIC shall be maintained until the IC and the Safety Officer conduct a safety survey of the incident. Part of the survey shall include determining whether an IDLH atmosphere, or other potential hazards, still exists.

**IV. DEPLOYMENT**

1. IC's Duties

- a) Consult the IC position checklist.
- b) A RIC deployment will be initiated by a call for help from a lost or trapped firefighter(s), or by any Fireground member who loses contact with the members of their crew, Division, or Group for any reason.
- c) Upon hearing a Fireground "Mayday", the IC shall immediately acknowledge the Emergency Traffic, announce radio silence, and ask the Firefighter initiating the "Mayday" for his/her name, location, situation, and condition. In the case of a lost/trapped firefighter, the firefighter shall be instructed to activate their PASS device, turn on their flashlight, remain calm, and stay on the current radio channel. The rescue of a trapped or lost firefighter in a burning building is an especially time sensitive event. There is a narrow window of survivability for a firefighter who is low on SCBA air or trapped by an approaching fire. All personnel on the fireground must not delay the reporting of lost personnel or the inability to complete routine accountability reports. All companies that are assigned to assist with the rescue of the "Mayday" Firefighter shall report to the RGS.
- d) All operational radio traffic not involved with the RIC deployment shall switch to TAC-55, the standby TAC channel. When appropriate, an additional standby TAC channel shall be established. Companies in proximity to the lost or trapped Firefighter(s) should be polled to ascertain if they are in a position to assist with the rescue of the Mayday Firefighter while the RIC Company is being deployed.

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- e) If not already established, the IC shall assign a RGS (RIC Group Supervisor). If a RGS is not established prior to the "Mayday", the IC should consider assigning either the Safety Officer or the Division Supervisor where the "Mayday" was initiated as the RIC Group Supervisor. Management of the RIC operations shall be transferred to the RGS. The IC will quickly become overwhelmed if he/she tries to manage the RIC deployment and other incident activities at the same time. The IC and the RGS shall maintain operational discipline and manage the activities within their scope of responsibility.
- f) The IC shall initiate a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) as soon as possible upon switching the operations to the Standby TAC channel. The IC cannot develop an effective rescue plan until accurate information is available on the number of missing firefighters, their identity, their last reported work area, and which companies are affected.
- g) The IC shall assign another RIC separate from the ongoing rescue to provide RIC coverage for the remaining operations.
- h) The Command/General staff shall conduct an immediate evaluation of current operations, their effectiveness, and the safety of personnel. Immediate and appropriate actions shall be taken to mitigate the risks associated with the incident.
- i) The IC shall immediately restructure the Incident Action Plan (IAP) to include a high priority to the Firefighter Rescue Effort.
- j) The IC shall request an additional two alarms.
- k) The IC shall expand the ICS command structure as appropriate to stay ahead of the incident. This action must be proactive and aggressive. Positions to consider are Rehab Group, Deputies to the Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, RIC Group Supervisor, and Safety Officer.
- l) The IC shall insure that firefighting positions and activities are not abandoned. A concentrated effort shall be made to reinforce existing positions with an emphasis on controlling the fire in the proximity of the rescue area. In some cases, it may be necessary to "write off" portions of a building in order to better protect the rescue effort.
- m) Insure a County Breathing Support Unit (SCBA refill Unit) is on scene.

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2. RGS (RIC Group Supervisor)'s Duties

- a) Consult the RGS position checklist.
- b) Request additional crews to support the rescue operation (relay rescue).
- c) Develop and communicate a rescue plan.
- d) Consider alternate exit and entry points for the RIC.
- e) Initiate the RGS Air Management Form prior to RIC entry.
- f) Keep the IC informed of the progress of the rescue.
- g) Maintain accountability for all members assigned to the rescue.

VI. POST DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1. Develop relief schedule for all affected crews.
2. Assign Chief Officer to develop CSID resources.
3. Secure and bag all equipment from rescued firefighters (PPE, SCBA, etc.).
4. Notify Host Agency Fire Chief of RIC deployment.
5. Request Fire Investigators.
6. Continue structural evaluation.
7. Establish Welfare Officer
  - FD representative to hospital(s).
  - FD representative to meet with family(s).
  - Consider transportation for member(s) family.
8. Every rescue action will be investigated and a report sent to the Agency Fire Chief. This investigation will be the responsibility of the IC.

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### VII. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. The factors that determine the degree to which Rapid Intervention Crews are formed and deployed are incident-driven. As the incident expands in size or complexity, the Incident Commander shall designate a RIC or multiple RIC's and a RIC Group Supervisor.
2. The Incident Commander must have a treatment area in position to immediately treat any rescued Firefighters. Medical needs of RIC personnel must also be considered. The Incident Commander must consider the establishment of a Medical Unit to manage the treatment and transport of Incident Personnel.
3. The RIC Group Supervisor should consider being co-located with the Division Supervisor managing support activities in the area of the deployment. The Incident Commander should also consider an Assistant Safety Officer assigned solely to the Division where the deployment is occurring.
4. In cases of structural collapse with missing or trapped Firefighters, the Incident Commander must request County US&R Teams to support the incident. The US&R Teams primary function is to provide building shoring or other specialized rescue equipment.
5. The IC will need to control the media early and throughout the incident. Every attempt must be made to manage the release of the identity and condition of the lost Firefighter until the next of kin can be notified. Media film crews should be restricted to areas that are safe and at a distance that will prevent identification of any injured firefighters.

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APPENDIX:

1. Required minimum equipment list for pre-designated RIC companies.
2. RIC Branch Director Worksheet (Critical Fireground Factors to be attached or copied on reverse side).
3. RIC Group Sup' Worksheet – and – RIC Group Sup' Air Mgt Worksheet (these two sheets should be attached or two-sided copy).
4. IC/Ops Section Chief RIC Worksheet (Critical Fireground Factors to be attached or copied on reverse side).

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Quantity	Description
1	RIC Air Pack w/ 45 min (min) air cylinder, universal quick fill connection, and face mask.
1	McGuire Sled. This will be wrapped around the RIC Air Pack
1	Thermal Imaging Camera
1	Gas powered Circular Saw
1	Chain Saw
1	Flathead Axe
1	Pick head Axe
1	24" Bolt Cutters
1	Sledge Hammer (10lb min)
1	Standard Pike Pole
1	Haligan Bar
1	Boxlight (Streamlight or equivalent)
3-4	Flashlight (Survivor, Streamlight, Pelican, or better). One per crew member.
3-4	Portable Radio w/ Lapel mic. One per crew member.
6	Door wedges (wood or plastic)
4	Strobe lights (battery powered)
2	20' of Red 1" Tubular Webbing
2	15" of Blue 1" Tubular Webbing
1	24' Extension Ladder
1	14' Straight Ladder
1	Sling MAST Loops
4	Phoenix Loops
1	Kershaw National Geographic Knife/Carbineer combo
1	Wire Cutter
1	Red Vinyl Salvage Cover for RIC Tool Cache
1	Large Area Search Bag consisting of: 230' Kevlar Rope (in stuff sack) with 2" metal loops and knots at 20' increments, four – 20' x 1/2" lateral search lines



# Critical Fireground Factors

## Risk Management Philosophy

*We will initiate every response under the assumption there are lives and property to save.*

*We will risk our lives a lot, in a calculated manner, to save savable lives.*

*We will risk our lives a little, in a calculated manner, to save property.*

*We will not risk our lives at all, for what is already lost.*

*Early recognition of these factors will help reduce the possibility of a Firefighter Injury or Entrapment on the Fireground.*

- Active working Fire, and entry time will be delayed, or there is a loss of “time recognition” by crews or the IC.
- Multiple Companies have been assigned to enter through one entry point.
- Roof Division Companies are being driven off the roof as crews are preparing to go inside.
- Air is being drawn in rapidly in zero visibility and heat is banking down.
- Interior Crews can hear the fire burning above them, but they can't see it.
- Interior Crews are working underneath a mezzanine.
- Crews feel “uncomfortable” with the situation they are in.
- A Crews SCBA low air alarm activates, and they are still searching for the seat of the fire.
- Interior Crews flow water for several minutes and make no progress on the fire.
- Interior Crews hear the sound of roof ventilation operations being conducted behind them.
- Crews are unable to communicate with the Incident Command or Division / Group Supervisors.
- A Crew or crewmember is in trouble, and fails to recognize it. A call for Emergency Traffic is delayed or not initiated.
- Crews are deep inside a Commercial Building with 1 ¾” lines rather than 2 ½” lines.
- Prior to building entry, Fireground Companies and the IC fail to recognize basic construction features that should influence decision making and actions.
- Crews and Commanders are not following the “order model” for communications, or are using terms that are unclear and send mixed messages.
- Company Officers are not monitoring the air supply status of their crews, and are not practicing proper air management techniques.
- All members operating on the Fireground fail to evaluate and apply the “Risk Management Philosophy” to their assignment.

# Firefighter Assigned

# Air Management

# Reported Location

\_\_\_\_\_ This form intended for one missing or trapped firefighter. \_\_\_\_\_

R.I.C. COMPANY	TIMES		PAR REQUEST / UPDATES PAR – KNOTS – AIR		PAC/CAN* (Firefighter Found) Knots/Location
			TIMES		
	IN				
	TURN AROUND				
	OUT				
	IN				
	TURN AROUND				
	OUT				
	IN				
	TURN AROUND				
	OUT				
	IN				
	TURN AROUND				
	OUT				

\* Pass-device **A**ssessment **C**ommunication / **C**onditions **A**ctions **N**eeds

February 17, 2006

August 3, 2005

## INCIDENT CLOCK

- 10 MINUTES
- 50 MINUTES
- 90 MINUTES

- 20 MINUTES
- 60 MINUTES
- 100 MINUTES

- 30 MINUTES
- 70 MINUTES
- 110 MINUTES

- 40 MINUTES
- 80 MINUTES
- 120 MINUTES

### *San Mateo County*

#### RIC GROUP SUPERVISOR - RIC Worksheet

RIC/INTIAL TAC CHANNEL \_\_\_\_\_ STANDBY TAC CHANNEL \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND CHANNEL \_\_\_\_\_

### PRE-DEPLOYMENT

- Assemble crew(s) and brief on incident details.
- Stage RIC tools and equipment on tarp. Additional tools and equipment as deemed necessary based on the incident.
- Notify I.C. (C.A.N. report) RIC Group "Ready"
- Prepare Air Management Worksheet
- Recon the incident scene (apparatus placement, points of entry, alternate doors and windows)
- Consider multiple staging / deployment points for large buildings
- Provide additional means of egress for roof operations or companies operating above the ground floor.
- Remove security bars/devices
- Coordinate the opening of doors and windows
- Confirm status of utilities
- Request additional personnel if needed.
- Consider critical fire ground factors (risk analysis/see back of form).

### DEPLOYMENT

- Start air management of RIC Crew(s)
- Consider air management of victim (elapsed time)
- Consider the point of entry for crew/member in trouble.
- Consider the last known location of crew/member in trouble
- Establish additional RIC's for relay rescue
- Consider additional suppression support for RIC crew deployment
- Monitor air supply.
- Consider firefighter fatigue
- Consider alternative exit points
- Provide timely reports (C.A.N.) and PAR's to direct supervisor or Incident Commander
- Communicate the rescue plan
- Communicate the search plan

# INCIDENT CLOCK

- |                                     |                                      |                                      |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 MINUTES | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 MINUTES  | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 MINUTES  | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 MINUTES  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50 MINUTES | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 MINUTES  | <input type="checkbox"/> 70 MINUTES  | <input type="checkbox"/> 80 MINUTES  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 90 MINUTES | <input type="checkbox"/> 100 MINUTES | <input type="checkbox"/> 110 MINUTES | <input type="checkbox"/> 120 MINUTES |

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## IC/OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF - RIC Worksheet pg1

RIC/INTIAL TAC CHANNEL \_\_\_\_\_ STANDBY TAC CHANNEL \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND CHANNEL \_\_\_\_\_

### PRE-DEPLOYMENT

- Start 10-minute clock with dispatch/IDT if not already running.
- Assign RIC Company.
- Assign RIC Group Supervisor.
- Assign Safety Officer.
- Ensure Breathing Support on scene.
- Confirm additional TAC channel.
- When RIC established, Out Team transitions to accountability only.

### DEPLOYMENT

- Request EMERGENCY TRAFFIC/ Stop unnecessary radio traffic.
- Identify EMERGENCY TRAFFIC initiator (name, company, problem, and location).
- Instruct personnel to stay calm, activate PASS, and take measures to increase survivability.
- Deploy available resources (Out Team, RIC, companies in immediate area).
- RIC to TAC channel of downed firefighter.
- Assign fireground operations to assigned standby TAC channel.
- Request additional Alarm(s).
- Establish another RIC for the incident/request another standby TAC channel
- Assign additional companies to RIC Group per needs.
- Obtain PAR on all crews.

- Establish Medical Group. Activate transport and consider MCI activation.
- Evaluate current mode of operation (offensive/defensive, etc.) Change if needed.
- Expand Command Organization appropriately (if needed).
- Determine Technical Rescue requirements.
- Assess structural stability continuously.
- Reinforce firefighting positions. Consider large hand lines (2 1/2").
- Establish/Expand Rehab Group.
- Ventilate and maintain tenability.

### POST DEPLOYMENT

- Notify Host agency Fire Chief of RIC Deployment.
- Develop Relief schedule for all affected crews.
- Establish Welfare Officer
  - FD representative to each hospital
  - FD representative to members home
  - Consider transportation for families
- Assign Chief Officer to develop CISD resources
- Secure and bag rescued members PPE (including SCBA, etc)
- Request Fire Investigators
- Notify Department Chaplin (if appropriate)
- Continue structural evaluation
- Establish/Ensure PIO Assignment

*August 3, 2005*