

**JOINT RESPONSE AGREEMENT
MODEL STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE**

SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION CREW (RIC) SOG

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SCOPE and PURPOSE

Butler County firefighters often respond to incidents that present a high risk to personal safety. The Butler County Fire Chiefs recognized the need to be proactive and provide for a dedicated group of firefighters assembled on the scene ready to affect an immediate rescue of another firefighter in need. This dedicated group of firefighters will be known as a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC).

These guidelines should be implemented at all “working” structure fires; however, this guideline is not only applicable to the mitigation of structure fires. A RIC should be established at any time firefighting personnel are in any atmosphere that is immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) or one that may become so due to equipment failure, sudden condition changes or mishap.

Examples of situations where a RIC would be established:

- Structural Fire attack
- Hazardous Materials Incidents
- Trench Rescue
- Confined Space
- Water / Ice Rescue

Furthermore, these are not rules but guidelines under the best of conditions with the maximum resources available. This document will help ensure that trained and equipped teams of firefighters are available and follow standardized operational guidelines throughout the county.

DEFINITIONS

RIC - Rapid Intervention Crew/Company (according to NFPA 1561 Section 3.3.44. A minimum of two fully staffed equipped responders who are on site and assigned specifically to initiate the immediate rescue of injured or trapped responders.

RIC Group Supervisor – Supervises the rescue of the firefighter. He/she is responsible for the overall direction of the rescue and all crews assigned to them. (according to NFPA 1581 a Group Supervisor is a person who is in charge of a functional area of operation)

RIC Leader – Heads up the interior crew that is tasked with rescuing the firefighter. (according to NFPA 1561 a leader is someone who heads up a resource)

ASSIGNMENT

An Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC) should be available on-site prior to operations beginning in any IDLH environment that does not present with an immediate life safety rescue. An IRIC consists of two firefighters available from any one of the companies on the initial alarm that are not assigned another specific fireground function.

Immediately upon confirmation of a working fire, the Incident Commander (IC) should contact dispatch and request an additional engine or truck company not already on the initial alarm. This company will not be expected to fill out the standard tactical assignments necessary to bring the incident under control. This company will fulfill the full RIC complement needed at every structural fire.

The IC may change the company assigned to the RIC function, providing that another on-scene company is available and has resources to cover the RIC assignment. Generally the initial established RIC will maintain in place in a ready state to ensure continuity during the incident; however, the RIC may need to be rotated out through rehab or additional team may be added as the incident escalates.

Upon arrival at the scene the radio designation for the RIC firefighters will be identified as following example indicates: "Engine 81" crew will be identified as "RIC 81". The RIC Leader will receive a briefing from the Incident Commander.

Response of RIC units will be on an emergency basis. If initial companies are in an investigative mode the RIC unit will respond to staging and report to the IC via radio. If initial companies are engaged in a working incident, the RIC units will position their apparatus for effective equipment deployment and report directly face-to-face with the IC.

COMMITMENT

The RIC will not be considered available manpower to fulfill normal fire ground functions. They are to be used for situations where their intervention will directly save lives of firefighters.

- Report of trapped or downed firefighters
- Report of firefighters missing or unaccounted for
- Any situation in which the IC decides immediate action by the RIC is necessary to save a life

Only the IC can direct the RIC to deploy. The IC must be aware of and approve all exterior support work the RIC is engaged in.

INDIVIDUAL and COMPANY EQUIPMENT

An Individual certified firefighter trained to NFPA Firefighter I with the following personal equipment.

- Full PPE
- SCBA w/PASS
- Flashlight
- Individual Rope or Webbing 20' length
- Portable Radio

RIC will be formed from a unit assigned to the incident. Four firefighters including an officer are desired; a minimum of three firefighters is recommended. The RIC unit personnel should assemble the following recommended equipment cache upon arrival at the incident.

- Tarp approximately 8' x 8' Orange in color for equipment cache staging
- RIC/UAC Air transfill kit with MMR and facepiece
(Optionally a complete SCBA with MMR and facepiece)
- Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC)
- Portable Flash Lights
- Irons Pack (Halligen, flat head axe)
- Sledge
- Bolt Cutters, wire cutters
- Rescue Rope 150'
- Search Rope 150'
- Power Saws (Chainsaw and/or Rotary Saw)
- 24' Extension Ladder, 14' Roof Ladder

PROACTIVE RIC DUTIES

Upon arrival and reporting to the Incident Commander, RIC will perform an initial size-up of the structure and assemble their cache of equipment. This size-up will include a complete survey around the structure (360°) identifying all possible means of entrance and egress from the structure as well as conditions and/or obstacles that may prevent a firefighter from rapidly exiting the structure. (Example: Doors padlocked closed, Security bars and gates, etc.) The RIC Leader shall report findings to the Incident Commander (IC).

All impediments to rapid firefighter exit shall be removed as appropriate. Glass in windows shall not always be considered a barrier preventing firefighter escape. Coordination must take place with the IC and interior crews before any ventilation (opening of windows or doors) to prevent unwanted fire spread. All members of the RIC should perform this size-up together. During size-up determine if additional RIC units are needed and advise the IC.

RIC may conduct proactive safety assignments only from the exterior. (Example: Staging of tools and equipment, placing secondary egress ladders) Remain alert to the radio and observe fireground conditions while maintaining availability for assignment.

INCIDENT COMMANDER

In the event of a MAYDAY situation there are additional responsibilities for the IC. The IC must maintain focus on the overall incident. Fire attack operations must continue without interruption.

The IC will notify dispatch of the MAYDAY situation and immediately request an additional alarm to be placed into staging and ensure a staging officer has been assigned.

The IC should ensure a second RIC is available to deploy immediately upon deployment of any RIC team. The IC should ensure a separate RIC is available for each fire fighter that is reported missing or injured.

The IC will appoint a RIC Group Supervisor to oversee all RIC operations. The RIC Group Supervisor may be appointed at any time prior to any mayday situation occurring as a proactive safety measure taken by the IC

The IC shall immediately deploy the RIC and alert the communications center that a mayday has been declared, and request if desired the activation of the channel marker on the assigned fire ground talk group indicating a restricted channel status.

Until staffing allows, the IC will manage the suppression effort and the RIC operation on the originally assigned fire ground talk group.

When the IC has the additional staffing to separate suppression from RIC the IC may then request an alternate talk group from the communications center. After the alternate talk group has been assigned, the IC shall switch all fire companies involved in the suppression effort to the assigned alternate talk group (i.e. Fire Ground 16 for continuation of routine fire ground communication).

RIC GROUP SUPERVISOR

Shall report directly to the Incident Commander (IC). This position is subordinate to the IC.

The RIC Group Supervisor directs the rescue effort of the RIC from the exterior, assembling assist teams and resources to assist with the rescue efforts.

Communicates directly with the downed firefighter(s) and the RIC on the original fireground channel.

Should maintain accountability for all RIC units operating on the fireground.

RIC DEPLOYMENT

Upon declaration of a "MAYDAY" the RIC Leader shall report immediately to the IC to determine the last known location of the distressed firefighter from accountability. Once deployed the IC should appoint a RIC Group Supervisor to direct rescue operations and resources.

The RIC Leader determines the best location to make entry to search for the firefighter(s).

RIC will perform a rapid search of the structure with an emphasis on the distressed firefighter(s) last known location. The use of a search/tag line is highly recommended.

Upon finding the distressed firefighter, the RIC Leader should immediately transmit to the RIC Group Supervisor the condition, location, company, and identity of the firefighter.

If no extrication is involved, the RIC should begin removing the firefighter from the structure.

If the firefighter requires extrication, the RIC Leader will determine the most efficient access to the firefighter, and communicate this to RIC Group Supervisor. The RIC Leader will perform a rapid size-up of the extrication needs and request necessary equipment and personnel from RIC Group.

The RIC Leader shall be in charge of the rescue effort on the interior and will maintain close supervision of his/her members and remain cognizant of their air supply and physical condition.

Additional personnel may be needed depending on the nature of the tasks to be performed during the rescue effort. All additional companies assisting with the rescue effort will report to the RIC Group Supervisor for assignment.

These companies can be utilized to place protective hose-lines between the fire and the RIC and the distressed firefighter(s). Furthermore, they may be utilized to place ground ladders or transport air cylinders, tools and equipment to affect the rescue effort.

All assisting companies should use their normal company identifiers for radio traffic with the IC or RIC Group

TRAINING

The Butler County Fire Chiefs fully understand that training personnel is the responsibility of each authority having jurisdiction (AHJ). This training guideline recommends requirements for crew members, various training objectives, basic skills, equipment, and training evolutions. Conducting, evaluating and documenting RIC training is the responsibility of the AHJ.

Instructors shall be qualified to deliver RIC training as determined by the AHJ. Student-to Instructor ratio should not be greater than 5-1. Additional instructors should be designated during periods of extreme temperatures, when large groups are present, and evolutions of long duration or complexity are planned.

Students should have been trained to a minimum of Firefighter I in NFPA 1001 prior to participation in the RIC Training Program.

The RIC Training Program will include both knowledge based activities and intense practical hands-on skills; such as, in accordance with but not limited to compliance with NFPA 1407.

- Fireground risk assessment and management
- Case history related to firefighter emergencies
- Deployment criteria and operational guidelines
- Integration of RIC into the ICS and accountability
- Impact of RIC on the safety and well-being of all firefighters on the scene
- Declaration of firefighter emergency
- Air Supply and Air Management
- Firefighter self-rescue techniques
- Protecting downed firefighters in place
- Search Techniques
- Access and Extrication
- Tools and Equipment
- Moving downed firefighters
 - Drags, lifts and carries
 - Up and down stairs
 - Conscious and unconscious firefighters on ladders
 - Moving through windows
 - Moving through floors
 - Moving through reduced openings, such as in an attic

The minimum required skills and abilities of the RIC team consists of assembling the necessary staffing, the minimum equipment, providing for individual and crew accountability, locating and removing a firefighter from a hazardous environment all of which will be evaluated during training. Personnel will be evaluated as individuals; as well as, members of teams.

The Instructor-in-charge should ensure the minimum student-to-instructor ratio is followed at all times. Prior to any evolution the instructors should ensure that all PPE is worn and used according to manufactures guidelines. Instructors shall continually monitor participants, and provide for rest and rehab of participants during evolutions. A safety officer should be appointed for all RIC training evolutions. When any firefighter is participating as a downed firefighter during a vertical lift scenario, or emergency escape bailout, the firefighter shall be secured by a belay line and a Class 1 harness.