Manitowoc County – MABAS Division 128 Rapid Intervention Policy

Section 1: Scope

While operating at emergency incident scenes, firefighters experience one of the highest occupational injury risks. To minimize emergency scene risk, Division 128 establishes a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) within the Incident Management System (IMS). This policy meeting the scope and intent of the NFPA 1561, 1997 ed. 4-1.8.   This policy establishes a means to effectively assist firefighters suddenly threatened by a dangerous situation, to initiate an immediate rescue effort in response to a mayday or other call for help, report of a lost or missing firefighter, or to other emergency report. This policy encompasses all emergency environments including those considered an IDLH atmosphere. Special response teams may require their team's policy override the firefighter RIT policy. The Incident Commander and Safety Officer must assure, regardless of the type of incident, that a RIT is in-place and appropriately equipped to rescue any firefighters in distress.

Section 2: Team Requirements

Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT):
- Consists four or more firefighters
- Shall have at least the same level of training and protective equipment as those operating at the scene.
- Must be trained and able to perform rapid firefighter rescue functions.
- More than one RIT shall be established if the incident warrants due to geographic size or incident complexity

Section 3: Establishment of RIT

Incident Command shall establish the RIT whenever emergency personnel are expected to operate under hazardous conditions that are deemed IDLH as soon as it is practical to do so. RIT structure should be flexible based on the incident's size and operational complexity. After careful scene risk evaluation, the Incident Commander shall provide one or more intervention teams commensurate with the risks levels.

A. Prior to a MABAS level Box Alarm, RIT shall be either:
- On-scene personnel designated and dedicated as RIT.
- On-scene personnel performing other functions, but ready to perform RIT functions.

B. As the incident escalates to either a MABAS Box Alarm level, in size, or complexity the RIT shall be dedicated, on-scene personnel.
- Departments may either pre-designate a specific RIT company on their box alarm cards or assign RIT to an early arriving company.

C. A formal RIT may take the place of, or include members from, the initial response company (2 In / 2 Out) that may have been established before RIT arrival.

Section 4: Reporting on Scene
Companies pre-designated or assigned to the RIT function will bypass staging and report directly to command.

- Apparatus should position so as not to interfere with other fire ground operations.
- Incident Command must be aware that the RIT apparatus will not be available for other tactical assignments unless otherwise specified (the entire company will be expected to perform RIT).
- The RIT shall secure a hose line for their use. This line should be separate from the attack or back-up line. (Example: the attack and back-up line may come from one engine, but the RIT line should come from a different engine) All three lines **should not** come from the same engine or water supply.
- Company Officer shall turn in passport to accountability officer.

The RIT Team shall have the listed equipment available upon arrival:
MINIMUM REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Arriving RIT Team	Requesting RIT Department
TIC	SCBA Bag
Hand Lights	SCBA Mask
Radios	Tool Bag
Irons	Search Rope/Endless loop
Pike Poles	Tarp
Ground Ladder	

RECOMMENDED OR MADE AVAILABLE
a. Portable saws (2) wood and metal
b. Oxygen / EMS equipment AED or defibrillator
c. Stokes basket
d. Thermal Imaging Camera
e. Salvage tarp for equipment staging
f. Supplied air
g. Portable hydraulic tools or rabbit tool
h. Ground ladder
i. Portable ladder
j. Set of irons (flat head axe & halogen)
k. Portable saws (2) wood and metal blades
l. Sledge hammer or maul
m. Search Rope 150' length
n. Hand lights (spare and each person)
o. Ground ladder (rec. 24')
p. Portable radio with appropriate freq

    q. SCBA complete with face piece
    r. SCBA spare cylinder
    s. 8' or 10' pike pole
    t. Tarps
    u. Tool box
    v. Battery operated JAWs

- Structure size-up will dictate additional equipment that may be needed.
- RIT shall stage all equipment on a tarp in an area most readily accessible to potential rescues.
- RIT members are responsible for carrying individually assigned equipment.

While the remaining crew assembles required equipment, the RIT officer will meet face-to-face with, and get a briefing from, the incident command and Safety Officer. The briefing will consist of the following information:
    - What is the action plan (offensive or defensive)
    - What has occurred during the attack (significant events)
    - Incident time frames (duration of attack, crews inside)
    - Operating crew locations
    - Other resources responding
    - View available tactical worksheets
    - Review available preplan information
    -Concerns

Section 5: Scene Size up

The RIT is expected to perform initial and on-going structure assessments to determine possible RIT need due to firefighters in distress. Based on information received from the Incident Commander, the RIT will determine structure access points for rapid entry/exit and other firefighter survival keys. Scene size-up may be conducted by the RIT as a team or with members staged at the immediate access point while others perform the size-up. If the crew splits up to perform size-up, the crews must remain a minimum of two personnel and both crews <u>must</u> maintain radio contact with command and each other.

RIT structure size-up will be based on firefighter survival; on what may cause firefighters to be trapped, lost or become missing inside the structure, and how RIT can facilitate their escape. Structure size-up may include, but no be limited to, the following: (See RIT checklist)

1. Size-up structure, complete 360 degree walk around when possible
2. Highest priority: Identify and remove any hazards that will block or slow firefighter building evacuation. Open or cause to be opened any exit that is locked, blocked or non-existent.
3. Building dimensions

4. Building occupancy
5. Building construction type
6. Placement of windows, doors, fire escapes, etc.
7. Potential danger from high-security devices
8. Fireground tactics being used and locations of companies.
9. Review Pre-plans

After completing the size-up, report to the IC any information that may dictate a change in operations. The RIT team should then stage at a primary entry point or other point determined by RIT size-up.

Section 6: Primary RIT Task
When assigned, RIT shall be responsible for the following primary tasks:

1. Respond to any report of firefighter(s) in distress (MAYDAY CALL).
2. Assess the need and place or call for placement of ground ladders.
3. Assemble minimum required equipment at primary entry point.
4. Monitor radio (Fireground Red) and maintain contact with command.
5. Assess where firefighters are working in the structure and any special tasks assigned.
6. Assure that tools assigned to RIT are appropriate to situation.
7. Receive situation status from command or other groups during deployment.
8. Place SCBA tank on and mask in stand by position

As part of the scene size-up, RIT may complete the following tasks if this does not take them away from the primary tasks and as long as these tasks support the incident's strategy. These tasks will not include situations requiring direct entry into the IDLH environment or using their SCBA. Task assignments should take into account that the RIT should not be allowed to fatigue unless needed for rescue:

1. Secure Utilities
2. Perform horizontal fan ventilation
3. Open rear of structure in accordance with primary task function
4. Unblock other areas of egress in operational areas
5. Other tasks assigned by command that maintain the RIT availability for their primary function.
6. Put up additional ladders as secondary means of egress
7. Assists with outside lighting

If RIT deploys into an IDLH environment or as a result of a mayday or other firefighters emergency, another back-up RIT must be assigned. The IC should consider upgrading to the next level box alarm to maintain adequate staffing; including an additional EMS response.

Section 7: RIT Activation Procedure

RIT will be activated at any time a firefighter(s) are reported to be in distress, missing or unaccounted for. Upon receipt of any of these conditions, the RIT will deploy with appropriate tools and equipment for the situation. RIT will deploy to the location where the firefighter(s) are in distress or the last known location of the firefighter(s).

- RIT will operate on the active fire ground channel and communicate with command and the stricken firefighter(s).
- All other companies on the fire ground will hold their positions and switch radios to an alternate fire ground channel when command assigns it.
- An immediate PAR will be initiated within each company.
- Personnel will not evacuate or abandon their position unless conditions or orders from IC require. (While the need to rescue firefighters is paramount, other fire scene operations must continue so viable conditions can be maintained to support the firefighter rescue operation. For obvious reasons then, crews cannot freelance.)
- Crews in the immediate area of the firefighter emergency that may be able to make a rescue must communicate with command.

RIT will continue to operate in a rescue mode until firefighter(s) are located, assessed, evacuated from structure, and transferred to medical care, unless conditions prohibit further reasonable rescue attempts or if it is obvious that a successful rescue attempt is not possible. The decision to switch to a recovery mode will only be made by the IC or the Incident Safety Officer.

Section 8: RIT *Group* Officer Assignment

The RIT Group Officer (GO) assignment is an essential function to minimize the span of control when firefighters need rescue and the RIT is activated. (If RIT is assigned within an already established group then the RIT GO responsibilities would be the responsibility of that group officer.) Command must consider the span of control and determine if this is feasible. A RIT GO should be assigned when needed, at all box alarm or higher incidents that a RIT would normally be assigned to. Duties of the RIT GO include:

- The RIT GO will coordinate and act as RIT radio contact. This will enable the RIT to deliver rescue efforts without pausing to communicate on the radio. The RIT GO will be available to call for additional resources and to provide information to the Incident Commander (IC) as necessary.

- The RIT GO will work and communicate frequently with the Incident Safety Officer (ISO) in exchanging incident progress and safety concerns. These groups will work independently of each other while functioning under the Incident Commander or other group, designated by command.
- The RIT GO will be responsible for requesting additional RIT and resources as needed.
- On-scene Rapid Intervention Teams will be designated as RIT #1, RIT #2, and so on.
- This position will essentially serve as a Safety Officer for and with the RIT and will take steps necessary to insure the safety of the RIT while operating in the IDLH. The RIT GO should utilize whatever means to insure group safety including:
- Use of Thermal Imaging equipment
- Ordering of additional resources or changing fire ground tactics to support RIT operation
- Ordering the withdrawal or prohibiting entry into environments judged to hostile for crews to operate

Section 9: RIT *Group* Officer Qualifications

Personnel that are assigned as a RIT GO must meet the following position requirements It is recommended that departments establish these same requirements as minimums for internal personnel.

a. Fire Officer Designation within sponsoring department or equivalent work related experience

b. Advanced SCBA training

c. Rapid Intervention Training

d. Knowledge in building construction

e. Knowledge in roles/responsibilities of the RIT, IMS and deployment of RIT.

f. MABAS policies and procedures for RIT and fire ground safety.

g. Knowledge in the use of RIT SCBA and emergency connections

Section 10: Deactivation of RIT

RIT may be deactivated:

- After incident stabilization and when there are no existing IDLH atmospheres
- After consensus is reached between the RIT (or the RIT GO if assigned) and the ISO.

The IC will make the final determination and announce to all companies working on the fire ground that RIT has been deactivated. After deactivation, RIT may be reassigned to other normal company tasks.