

STANISLAUS CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ARTICLE: C-28  
SECTION: Operations Division  
DATE: 4/5/99  
SUPERSEDES:  
TITLE: **RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR  
INTERIOR STRUCTURE FIREFIGHTING – PROCEDURE DEFINITIONS**

- IDLH: Immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) means an atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effect, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.
- PAR: Personnel Accountability Report - A role call that is taken to account for all personnel on the incident.
- READY: For the purpose of this policy only, the term "ready" shall mean full protective clothing including structural turnouts, structure gloves, and nomex hood, SCBA with mask donned but not connected to regulator.
- RIC: Rapid Intervention Crew - A crew consisting of at least two personnel outside the structure monitoring those inside and prepared to rescue them. One of these firefighters must be free of all other tasks in order to account for, and if necessary, initiate rescue for, those firefighters inside.

This procedure will establish the strategy when firefighting personnel are exposed to an atmosphere of immediate danger to life and health (IDLH) as defined by California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (see definition above). This will ensure the safety of personnel when conducting firefighting activities in an IDLH atmosphere.

- A. When information (multiple calls, P.D. fire) is received indicating a working structure fire, the Emergency Dispatch Center, Battalion Chief or Company Officer will generate the following response: 3 Engines, 1 B/C, 1 District Chief  
Backfilling of the stations is the responsibility of the Fire Dispatcher and/or Battalion Chief.
1. The first arriving fire officer shall conduct a size up to determine potential loss of life or serious injury to the occupants.
    - a. **Residential Occupancies** - When the structure appears to be inhabited, it is to be assumed that a life hazard exists until a primary search has been completed.
    - b. **Business or Commercial Occupancies** - The use, time of day, day of week, pre-fire plan and reports from persons on scene should be considered.
    - c. **Abandoned and Vacant Structures** - Premise history, reports from persons on scene and structural conditions should be considered.

2. If initial attack personnel find a **known** life hazard situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life, deviation from the two-in/two-out standard may be permitted without the assistance of a RIC. The on-scene personnel may pass command of the incident and advise the incoming Incident Commander that an interior attack/rescue is being initiated.

If an interior attack/rescue is initiated without the use of a RIC, a thorough investigation of the incident shall be done by the department with a written report submitted to the Fire Chief.

3. Interior firefighting operations may also be initiated if through the knowledge and experience of the fire officer, conditions indicate that the fire has not yet reached the incipient stage or can be confined to a small portion of the structure with little risk to firefighters.
  4. If conditions exist that do not require intervention for the prevention of loss of life or serious injury, and if the incident cannot be confined in its incipient stage through the knowledge and experience of the fire officer on scene, interior firefighting operations shall not be initiated until six fire personnel are on scene. These six fire personnel may include any combination of personnel arriving at the incident.
  5. Firefighters initiating interior firefighting operations shall strictly adhere to the following safety rules:
    - a. All personnel entering an atmosphere of immediate danger to life and health (IDLH) shall be equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus.
    - b. Personnel operating in hazardous areas shall work in crews of at least two (2). These crews shall remain intact for all operations. Crews shall enter together, work together, and exit together. Each crew shall have a portable radio.
    - c. Once a crew has been assigned to a division or group, the crew shall remain with that division or group until reassigned and shall check in and out with the division or group supervisor (free lancing or individual action shall be prohibited).
- B. During structure fires where interior firefighting operations are implemented, a Rapid Intervention Crew shall be established for the safety of interior firefighters. This crew shall remain in place until released by the Incident Commander or Operations.
1. The Rapid Intervention Crew shall consist of a minimum of two personnel, who will arrive at the incident on the RIC engine company. A safety officer/check-in recorder shall be established immediately and the Incident Commander may act in this capacity until further personnel arrive to facilitate assignment of individual roles.
  2. The focus of the Rapid Intervention Crew shall be the safety of interior firefighters and this crew shall remain "Ready to enter an IDLH" to intervene when it becomes

known that interior firefighters are in danger due to flash over, structural collapse, equipment failure or other situations that would endanger their lives. The Rapid Intervention Crew may also assist with the removal of “found” victims, when requested by the Incident Commander or Operations. If the Rapid Intervention Crew is used, another Rapid Intervention Crew shall be assembled as soon as possible.

3. While in AReady to enter an IDLH $\cong$  status, one member of the RIC may assist with non-essential support activities such as feeding hose lines and changing air bottles. At the discretion of the RIC officer, other safety activities may be performed (e.g. securing utilities). The RIC shall not be engaged in any activities that would significantly delay their intervention or adversely impact the incident if it were not completed.
4. RIC Equipment:
  - a. Each member of the RIC shall be equipped with full protective clothing, breathing apparatus, and flashlight. The RIC shall also have a spare SCBA for rescue operations. Each RIC shall have a portable radio, axe, and short pike pole.
  - b. A hose line, independent of the suppression operations shall be identified and charged for the sole use of the RIT. If practical, this hose line should be taken from a source different from those involved in interior operations. (Exposure protection engine)
5. Location:
  - a. The RIC shall be in a Aready to enter an IDLH $\cong$  status and located in an area of the fire ground that provides the best access to interior crews, should the need arise.
6. Personnel Accountability Report:
  - a. The Incident Commander shall conduct a PAR (Personnel Accountability Report) approximately 15 minutes after initiation of interior firefighting operations. A PAR shall be repeated at 15-minute intervals for the duration of interior firefighting operations.

END

Written By: Rick Bussell, Captain

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