

SCOPE

This guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Department personnel responsible for emergency response.

PURPOSE

This guideline establishes a procedure to provide a required level of safety for personnel operating during the initial stages of an emergency. Initial stages shall encompass the tasks undertaken by the first-arriving companies with only one team assigned to or operating in an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) environment.

PROCEDURE

- A. Personnel operating in IDLH environments at emergency incidents shall operate in teams of two or more.
 - 1. Team members shall be in constant and direct communication with each other through visual, audible or physical means or safety rope.
 - 2. Radios or other electronic devices shall not constitute a means of direct communication.
 - 3. Team members shall be in close proximity to each other in order to provide assistance in case of an emergency.

- B. In the initial stages of an incident where only one team is operating in the IDLH environment at a working structure fire, a minimum of four individuals is required on scene.
 - 1. This group of four will consist of:
 - a. Two personnel working as a team in the IDLH environment.
 - b. Two stand-by personnel present outside the IDLH environment.
 - 2. The stand-by personnel shall be responsible for maintaining constant awareness of the status of personnel working in the IDLH environment. The stand-by personnel shall remain in radio, visual, voice or signal line communication with the interior team.

- C. Stand-by members shall be permitted to perform other fireground duties, provided constant communication is maintained with the interior team. Stand-by personnel shall not be assigned tasks so critical that the task would inhibit their ability to perform a rescue of the interior team or the task cannot be abandoned without placing other fireground personnel in danger.

- D. Stand-by personnel shall be provided with full protective clothing and equipment. This protective clothing and equipment shall be immediately available should the need for rescue activities in the IDLH environment become necessary.

- E. Once a second team is assigned to the IDLH environment, the incident shall no longer be considered in the "initial stage". A RIT team is then required.

EXCEPTIONS

- A. Entry without the above requirements is allowed only when there is a life hazard and where immediate action could prevent the loss of life.

- B. No exception shall be permitted when there is no possibility to save lives.