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| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** |
| **SOG Number:** |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** |

**Emergency Incident Operations**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Purpose:**

To determine safe operating procedures at emergency incidents so that personnel can safely perform tactical operations.

**Procedure:**

When inexperienced members of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department are working at an incident, direct supervision shall be provided by officers or more experienced members.

Fire fighters operating in hazardous atmospheres shall operate in teams of two or more. When unable to operate in teams, fire fighters shall limit their work to exterior operations and stay in close contact with their officer. Teams should stay in contact with each other through the use of visual, audible or physical means. Team members shall be in close proximity to each other to render emergency assistance if required.

In the initial stages of an incident where only one team is operating in a hazardous area, at least one additional person shall be assigned to stand by outside the hazardous area where the team is operating. This standby person shall be responsible for maintaining a constant awareness of the number and the identity of the members operating in the hazardous area, their location, function and time of entry. The stand by member must remain in radio, visual or voice contact with the entry team. The stand by person may be an apparatus operator or the incident commander until a Rapid Intervention Team can be established. Stand by personnel must be self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) certified, wear full protective clothing and have access to SCBA.

If rescue of fire fighters becomes necessary in the initial stages of an operation, the stand by person or incident commander shall communicate this to responding companies and then rescue or provide rescue for the initial entry team.

The initial stages of an incident shall include the assignment undertaken by the first arriving company with only one team assigned or operating in the hazardous area. It is expected that at a structure fire additional companies or officers shall arrive during the initial stages and provide at least four (4) additional personnel on scene to safely conduct interior operations. If the officer on the first arriving unit suspects that the second responding companies, members or officers will be delayed or not responding the officer should:

* Perform Risk vs. Benefits assessment of scene
* Focus on rescue of civilians
* Take a defensive position until adequate personnel arrive

Once a second team is assigned to operating in the hazardous area, the incident shall be no longer considered in the initial stages and at least one Rapid Intervention Team shall be assigned.

Rapid Intervention Teams exist for the rescue of fire fighters that are operating at emergency incidents. The formation and arrangement of a Rapid Intervention Team shall be flexible based on the type of incident and the size and difficulty of the operations. The incident command shall evaluate the situation and the risk to operating teams and shall provide one or more Rapid Intervention Teams as the number of personnel are available.

Rapid Intervention Teams shall be in full protective clothing with SCBA. Rapid Intervention Teams may perform other operations but shall remain ready to deploy to perform rescue of fire fighters if necessary. As the incident develops in size or complexity, Rapid Intervention Teams shall be either:

* On scene fire fighters designated and dedicated as the Rapid Intervention Team
* On scene companies either in staging areas, or designated and dedicated as Rapid Intervention Team

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**

West Redding (CT) VFD – GOG 5-OG-504 Developed/Revised/Reviewed by VFIS ETC