

Snohomish County Fire Chiefs Association

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RAPID INTERVENTION CREW

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To assure a safe, efficient and effective coordination of rapid intervention crews at fire scenes

2.0 PERSONNEL AFFECTED

- 2.1 Total Department

3.0 REFERENCE

- 3.1 WAC 296.305 Safety Standards for Firefighters
- 3.2 NFPA 1407 *Standard for Training Fire Service Rapid Intervention Crews*, 2010 edition
- 3.3 Snohomish County Fire Chiefs Incident Management System Policies

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)** – Governing body making policies and procedures for the affected fire department.
- 4.2 **C.A.N. Report** – A verbal report given over the radio or face-to-face from one person to another.
 - 4.2.1 **“C”** is for the conditions of the hazard area. (i.e. high heat, zero visibility, etc)
 - 4.2.2 **“A”** is for any action that you are currently performing. (i.e. searching floor 1, extinguishing fire, etc.)
 - 4.2.3 **“N”** is any needs you may require to accomplish your task. (i.e. 4 more personnel with a circular saw, air bottles, etc.)

NOTE: “A” is sometimes added to the CAN report (CANA) it is used when an individuals air supply is of significant importance, ie... the firefighter that is in need of rescue would be of significant importance. Tank capacity ie 30 min or 60 min is important to be included.

- 4.3 **Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmosphere** - Defined in WAC 296-62-07105 as “an atmosphere that poses a threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual’s ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere”.

- 4.4 Incipient Fire** - A fire which is in the initial or beginning stage and which can be controlled or extinguished by portable fire extinguishers, Class II standpipe or small hose systems.
- 4.5 Initial Stages of an Incident** - Includes the period of an incident when tasks are being undertaken by the first arriving companies with only one team assigned or operating within the IDLH atmosphere.
- 4.6 Mayday** – The term used when a firefighter(s) need immediate assistance (i.e. becoming trapped, disoriented, injured, etc.)
- 4.7 EMER Activation** – Radio activated MAYDAY call. The orange button on the top of a [your radio brand here].
- 4.8 Softening the Building** - Proactive measure taken by RIC Group members at the direction of the RIC Group Supervisor to assure that egress routes are established prior to any potential firefighter emergency. This could include removing window bars, removing locks, pre-positioning egress ladders and the controlled forcing of doors. **Before making any openings that could affect the ventilation profile, the RGS must get approval from the Incident Commander.**
- 4.9 Rapid Intervention Crews (RIC)** – A dedicated crew of firefighters who are assigned for rapid deployment to rescue lost or trapped members. (NFPA 1407 Definition.) (It is highly recommended to have 3 or more firefighters staffing a RIC.)
- 4.9.1 When RIC is deployed, another RIC will be established. For each RIC deployed another RIC will be established.
- 4.10 RIC Group** - A RIC Group shall be formed of multiple companies assigned to a RIC Group Supervisor to perform the functions of Rapid Intervention on the emergency scene.
- 4.11 RIC pack** – A pack assigned to a RIC . The pack contains a minimum of an air bottle, mask, universal air connection, wire cutters and a green tarp.
- 4.12 Standby Firefighters** - Refers to the firefighters who are assigned to standby outside the hazardous area ready to respond to a firefighter emergency. Standby firefighters can be assigned other tasks while standing by. Standby firefighters need to be in full bunker gear, with SCBA in standby position and shall consist of a **minimum** of two (2) personnel. Standby Firefighters provide for compliance with the 2in/2out requirements.

5.0 POLICY

- 5.1** It is the policy of [YOUR AGENCY HERE] to follow WAC 296.305. Early consideration should be given to providing one or more rapid intervention teams commensurate with the needs of the situation.
- 5.2** The Incident Commander shall not allow **RIC** deployment into the following “**No Go**” situations:

5.2.1 Extreme hazard to RIC companies with a high likelihood of severe injury or death, such as uncontrolled fire growth, eminent collapse or other significant uncontrolled hazards.

5.2.2 High risk to RIC companies with no potential to save a live victim.

5.3 All apparatus equipped with a RIC pack will be labeled on the exterior of the apparatus, on the compartment door containing the RIC pack. The compartment will be labeled "RIC" with a minimum 2" high green lettering.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 All personnel are responsible to abide by the provisions of this procedure.

7.0 PROCEDURE

7.1 RIC will be considered following WAC 296.305.05001 (10)(f)

7.1.1 Once a second crew arrives at the hot zone, the incident shall no longer be considered to be in the "initial stage," and at least one rapid intervention crew should be assigned.

7.1.2 Initial RIC formation: When personnel on the scene have been assigned to accomplish the initial strategies and tactics of the incident (i.e. suppression, search, ventilation, and standby firefighters), the incident commander shall consider the establishment of a rapid intervention team

7.1.3 Operate on the tactical channel

7.1.4 Maintain a state of readiness

7.1.5 Maintain an ongoing awareness of fire conditions and crew operations

7.1.6 Establish an equipment area with a minimum of the following tools

7.1.6.1 *Green Tarp*

7.1.6.2 *RIC pack*

7.1.6.3 *Search tools*

7.1.6.4 *Rescue tools*

7.1.6.5 *Thermal imaging camera (TIC)*

7.2 RIC Group Formation (Pre-MAYDAY/EMER Activation)

7.2.1 Establish RIC group

7.2.1.1 RIC group shall be established upon the deployment of a Rapid Intervention Crew

7.2.2 Brief RIC Group Supervisor (RGS) and Incident Safety Officer (ISO) on the incident action plan

7.2.3 Direct RGS to establish RIC group communications

7.2.3.1 *RGS shall be issued a second portable radio in the event an emergency activation is received. The RGS will monitor the incident channel and the emer channel. (It is recommended that the IC assign a RIC Group Aide to support the RGS.)*

7.2.4 RGS will perform a 360 degree size-up of the structure or incident site

7.2.5 Direct the establishment of the RIC group equipment area

7.2.6 Consider “softening the building”

7.2.6.1 *NO OPENING WILL BE MADE THAT MAY CHANGE THE VENTILATION PROFILE WITHOUT COORDINATION WITH INCIDENT COMMAND*

7.2.7 RIC group may support the fire ground operation in the area of the RIC group equipment area

7.2.7.1 *RIC group personnel will **NOT** be assigned to other tasks*

7.3 RIC Group Deployment (Post-MAYDAY/EMER Activation): *INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC) Responsibilities*

7.3.1 Acknowledge the MAYDAY/EMER activation

7.3.1.1 *If the firefighter issues a MAYDAY; consider having the firefighter(s) depress the EMER button to place their radios on the EMER channel*

7.3.2 Declare emergency radio traffic

7.3.3 Determine the nature of the emergency and who is involved

7.3.4 Get acknowledgement from the dispatch agency and emergency tones

7.3.5 Give “**GO or NO GO**” command to RGS

7.3.6 Consider requesting an addition alarm to assist with on-going firefighting operations or RIC group activities

7.3.7 Conduct an Emergency PAR / emergency accountability.

7.3.7.1 *Monitor EMER channel (if utilized)*

7.3.7.2 *Consider a command post aid*

7.3.7.3 *Consider an ISO assigned to RIC group*

7.3.7.4 *Consider a medical team assigned to RIC group*

7.3.8 Re-evaluate the Incident Action Plan and strategy

7.3.8.1 *Emphasis on on-going suppression to facilitate the RIC operation.*

7.4 RIC Group Deployment (Post-MAYDAY/EMER Activation): *RIC GROUP SUPERVISOR (RGS) Responsibilities*

7.4.1 Do not deploy until directed by the IC

7.4.2 Determine to the greatest extent possible the following information:

- 7.4.2.1 *Nature of emergency.*
- 7.4.2.2 *Who is involved? By name and company.*
- 7.4.2.3 *The last known location.*
- 7.4.2.4 *The needs of the firefighter(s).*
- 7.4.2.5 *If possible make contact with firefighter(s).*
- 7.4.2.6 *Have firefighter(s) activate PASS alarm intermittently.*
- 7.4.2.7 *If possible make contact with companies who may have been in the hazard area*

7.4.3 Formulate a rescue plan

7.4.3.1 *Ensure all RIC members are on the correct radio channel prior to Deployment*

7.4.3.2 *Direct the activation of search teams*

7.4.3.3 *Direct the activation of rescue teams*

7.4.3.4 *Request additional personnel and equipment as the situation dictates*

7.4.4 Consider a hose line to protect RIC egress

7.4.4.1 *Hose lines are a function of the IC. Coordinate through incident Command*

7.4.5 Consider a rapid exterior search to access firefighter(s)

7.4.5.1 *Exterior search can be accomplished by ISO or second RIC*

7.4.6 Have a medical team ready

7.4.7 Keep IC updated with status of RIC operation

7.4.8 A minimum of one RIC must be established at all times after the initial deployment. Each RIC should ensure the proper equipment is available for use (i.e. RIC packs, TIC, search tools, etc.)

7.5 RIC Group Deployment (Post-MAYDAY/EMER Activation): RIC TEAM MEMBERS

7.5.1 Utilize good tool management

7.5.1.1 *Initial RIC should travel light and fast. Take only the tools needed to access the firefighter(s)*

7.5.2 Give Radio C.A.N. reports to RGS

7.5.3 Follow sound air management practices

8.0 TRAINING GUIDELINES

8.1 When performing RIC training functions in live fire situations, do **NOT** use live firefighters playing the role of a downed firefighter

8.2 General. The rapid intervention training program shall include the following areas:

8.2.1 Risk assessment and risk management

- 8.2.2 Activation and management of rapid intervention operations
 - 8.2.3 Communications procedures specific to rapid intervention functions
 - 8.2.4 Accountability and resource management
 - 8.2.5 Criteria for deploying rapid intervention crews and resources to the scene
 - 8.2.6 Integration of firefighter rescue operations into the incident command system as specified by the AHJ
 - 8.2.7 Implementation of an incident accountability system that meets the requirements of NFPA 1561, *Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System*
 - 8.2.8 Potential impact of RIC operations on the safety and welfare of rescuers and others as well as on other activities at the incident location
 - 8.2.9 Distinction between rescue and recovery modes
- 8.3 Incident Management System Integration:** The AHJ shall provide for and utilize training on the implementation of an incident management system that meets the requirements of NFPA 1561, *Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System*, with written standard operating procedures applying to all members involved in emergency RIC operations
- 8.4 Rotation of RIC Personnel:** RIC instructors shall rotate personnel to reduce stress and fatigue
- 8.5 Rapid Intervention Skills:** The rapid intervention training program shall include the following, as a minimum for personnel and crew-oriented training and skill evaluation:
- Declare a firefighter emergency
 - Search techniques
 - Access and extrication
 - Air supply
 - Rope use
 - Protecting downed firefighter(s) in place
 - Moving downed firefighter(s) to safety
 - Firefighter self-rescue techniques
- 8.6 Declaring a Firefighter Emergency:** The following protocol shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel.
- 8.6.1 Declaration of an emergency (the word or phrase to initiate an emergency response by a RIC). Location, Unit, Needs, Air Levels, Resources
- 8.7 Search Techniques:** The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel
- 8.7.1 Searching an area utilizing rope, hose or an oriented firefighter
 - 8.7.2 Searching an area with limited means of egress

- 8.7.3 Searching with thermal imaging equipment
- 8.8 Access and Extrication:** The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel
 - 8.8.1 Breach of barriers (walls, ceilings, floors)
 - 8.8.2 SCBA profile reduction training
 - 8.8.3 Recognition of entanglement hazards and disentanglement
 - 8.8.4 Extrication from debris
- 8.9 Air Supply:** The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel. Air management procedures and techniques as required by NFPA 1404. *Standard for Fire Service Protection Training*
 - 8.9.1 SCBA's used in training shall comply with the requirements of NFPA 1981, *Standard for Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for Emergency Services*
 - 8.9.2 Reposition or replace SCBA face piece on a downed firefighter(s)
 - 8.9.3 Replace mask mounted regulator on a downed firefighter(s)
 - 8.9.4 Utilize RIC universal air connection (UAC)
 - 8.9.5 Resupply air to a downed firefighter(s)
- 8.10 Ropes, Slings and Harnesses:** The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel
 - 8.10.1 All belay and life safety ropes, slings and harnesses used in training shall comply with the requirements of NFPA 1983, *Standard on Life Safety Rope and Equipment for Emergency Services*
 - 8.10.2 When participating in an elevated emergency egress or vertical lift scenario, the firefighter in training shall be secured by a belay line and class 1 harness if one of the following applies
 - 8.10.2.1 The firefighter is playing the role of the downed firefighter
 - 8.10.2.2 The firefighter is participating in a self-rescue drill
 - 8.10.2.3 The firefighter is rappelling
 - 8.10.3 Rope to be used for search, slings and/or harnesses for removing downed firefighter(s)
 - 8.10.4 Use of mechanical advantage rope systems for the rescue of firefighters
 - 8.10.5 Use of rescue knots
 - 8.10.6 Use of any equipment or rescue tactics required by the AHJ

8.11 Protecting Downed Firefighter(s) in Place: The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel

8.11.1 Provide and maintain a continuous air supply

8.11.2 Provide protection via hose line

8.11.3 Secure a dedicated communications channel for rescue operations

8.11.4 Continuously monitor conditions that may affect RIC operations

8.12 Moving Downed Firefighter(s) to Safety: The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel. The training shall be conducted in various conditions (i.e. limited visibility conditions)

8.12.1 Using basic drags, lifts, and carries Move a downed firefighter(s)

8.12.2 Moving downed firefighter(s) up and down stairs

8.12.3 Moving a downed firefighter(s) via ground ladder

8.12.4 Moving a firefighter(s) through a window

8.12.4.1 Ground level

8.12.4.2 Upper level

8.12.5 Moving a firefighter(s) from below the area of operations (through floor)

8.12.6 Moving a downed firefighter(s) in an attic space

8.12.7 Moving a downed firefighter(s) through an elevated, restricted size window from a room with limited space for crew movement

8.12.8 Additions skills and rescue scenarios shall be developed as required by the AHJ

8.13 Firefighter Self-Rescue: The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel

8.13.1 Recognizing situations under which rapid intervention is required for rescue and required techniques for calling assistance

8.13.2 Self rescue from entanglement

8.13.3 Rapid room orientation and exit, including awareness of primary and secondary exits from a room

8.13.4 Individual air management

8.13.5 Escape techniques for elevated emergency egress as approved by the AHJ shall be conducted in compliance with section 8.10.2

8.14 Tools and Equipment: The following skills shall be included in the minimum training for RIC personnel

8.14.1 Tools and equipment contained in the RIC pack

8.14.2 Tools and equipment to be used by the RIC shall be determined by the AHJ based on the need and resources available

8.14.3 Training for rapid intervention shall also include training on other resource equipment and tools provided by the AHJ.

9.0 PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

9.1 General: The required performance for establishing a firefighter rescue team shall consist of assembling the necessary staffing, assembling the minimum amount of tools, maintaining crew integrity and accountability and locating and removing a firefighter from an IDLH

9.1.1 A safety officer shall be appointed for all RIC evaluations

9.2 Methods of Evaluation

9.2.1 The RIC shall be staged in an area designated by the evaluator prior to the start of the evolution

9.2.2 A simulated downed firefighter shall be placed in a location determined by the evaluator prior to the start of the evolution

9.2.3 Simulated “safe areas” shall be determined prior to the start of the evolution. The “safe areas” are where the RIC can move the downed firefighter(s) to complete the evolution

9.3 Locating, Assessing and Removing a Downed Firefighter

9.3.1 The required performance for locating, assessing and removing a downed firefighter shall consist of locating a downed firefighter(s) using organized search techniques as developed by the AHJ

9.3.2 RIC members shall wear full PPE and SCBA

9.3.3 The RIC shall evaluate the downed firefighter(s) for usable air supply, traumatic injury, level of consciousness and entrapment

9.3.4 A rescue air supply shall be placed in service when sustainable air for the downed firefighter(s) is absent

9.3.5 A radio report from the RIC to the RGS or IC to include the location, extent of injuries, air supply of RIC and downed firefighter(s) and needs shall be broadcast

- 9.3.6 The RIC shall package and remove the downed firefighter(s) to a “safe area”
- 9.4** RIC members shall perform downed firefighter rescue and removal in the following situations. All RIC members shall be in full PPE and SCBA. Techniques used will be the approved techniques developed by the AHJ
 - 9.4.1 Removing a downed firefighter(s) up/down a flight of stairs
 - 9.4.2 Removing a downed firefighter(s) from a first floor window
 - 9.4.3 Removing a downed firefighter(s) from a second floor or higher window
 - 9.4.4 Removing a downed firefighter(s), vertically from a below grade location (hole through floor)

Appendix "A"

Guidelines for Managing Two-in/Two-out

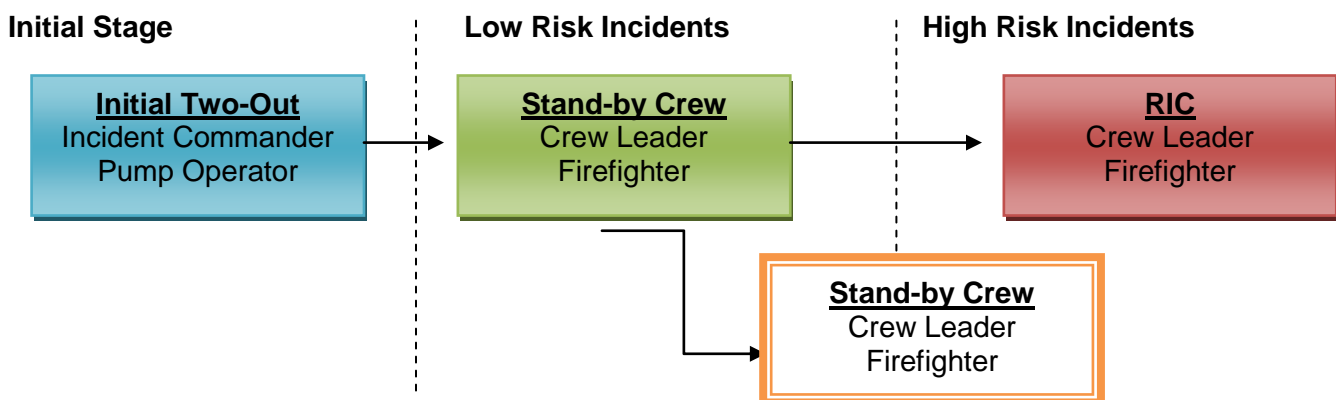
Rapid Intervention (Two-in/Two Out)

Incident Commanders must maintain rapid intervention capability (Two Out) so that, should the need arise, a rescue crew is readily available to provide for the rescue of any responders operating within a hazard area (Two-in). A hazard area is defined as any area that requires the use of PPE or in which a responder is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. This includes entering a structure reported to be a fire, operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations, confined space operations, rope rescue, haz-mat, etc.

Rapid Intervention is the **systematic management** of response to a "Mayday" situation where the need for an immediate rescue if emergency responders has become necessary.

Responsibility - Incident Commanders are ultimately responsible for the incident outcome and the safety of all responders operating at the scene. Therefore, Incident Commanders must maintain a constant balance between the urgent need to perform critical tasks and the personal safety of the responders performing those tasks. To support this, and before responders can be assigned to operate within a hazard area, Incident Commanders must establish a two-out resource capable of providing rapid intervention. Incident Commander must maintain this capability throughout the incident until the risk to responders has been sufficiently mitigated.

Providing Two-Out Capability - The methods for providing, Two-out should match the incident's degree of potential risk and can evolve as resources become available. The following flowchart provides a decision-making guideline, illustrating a model sequence for determining how, and to what extent, Two-out capability should be provided so that it corresponds with the incident stage, size, complexity, and level of risk to responders.



For high risk incidents, a RIC should be assigned, given time to prepare, while the Stand-by Crew provides Two-out. Once ready, the RIC replaces the Stand-by Crew who can move up to Back-up.

Two-Out Staffing Options

Initiating Two-out - During the "Initial Stage:" of an incident, the Two-out provision may be provided as a secondary responsibility by the Pump Operator and the Incident Commander.

The "Initial Stage" of an incident is defined as the stage that encompasses the tasks undertaken by the first arriving company with only one crew assigned or operating in the hot zone.

Once a second crew is assigned to operate within the hazard area, the incident is no longer in the "Initial Stage". With multiple crews operating in a hazard area, the Incident Commander and Pump Operator's ability to realistically function as an effective Two-out rescue crew drastically diminishes. At this point, the Incident Commander shall assign a dedicated crew of Two-out, which may be in the form of a Stand-by Crew or a RIC

The IC and Pump Operator can only initiate Two-out during the Initial Stage.

Stand-by Crew - A Stand-by Crew is assigned when the Incident Commander opts not to assign a RIC Crew. This would be done as a short term assignment for incidents that can be quickly and safely mitigated because they are contained, limited to contents, and are of minimal risk to responders. Examples include a smoldering mattress, an appliance fire, or a stovetop fire.

Standby Crews are assigned as a short term two-out provision for low risk incidents.

A Stand-by Crew can also be assigned as an interim step while waiting for a RIC to arrive and/or assemble. A Stand-by Crew consists of at least two firefighters held outside the hazard area, available for immediate assistance or rescue of an entry crew. Once relieved by a RIC, the Stand-by Crew may be assigned to become a Back-Up Crew.

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) - Functionally synonymous to a Stand-by Crew, a RIC is assigned for high risk incidents involving sustained operations to replace the Stand-by Crew. A RIC consists of at least two firefighters held outside the hazard area available for immediate assistance or rescue of an entry crew operating within the hazard. It must be recognized that a RIC alone may not be adequate when it comes to actually conducting a rescue of a trapped firefighter. Therefore, it must be understood that the

RIC should be assigned to replace the Stand-by Crew during high risk incidents.

The primary role of a Stand-by Crew or RIC is to:

1. **Locate** and gain access to the firefighter in peril;
2. Provide them with **emergency air** management; and to
3. Provide **reconnaissance** information to the Incident Commander for the coordination of additional crews assigned to support the rescue effort. **Rescue if able.**

RIC effectiveness is limited to only reacting to a rescue situation.

primary role of a RIC is only to initiate the rescue effort.

Back-up Crews

Back-up Crews are strategically pre-positioned in the immediate vicinity of crews operating in areas with a high level of risk. A pre-positioned back-up crew is the most familiar with the other crew's location, situation, the hazards they are exposed to, and the immediate surroundings. A back-up crew's placement also positions them to better recognize a potential or developing "Mayday" situation, enabling them to immediately intervene, thus averting a "Mayday" situation.

Back-up Crews provide protection because they are positioned in a manner that allows them to initiate actual intervention.

Back-up crews are intended to provide a crew of at least two members positioned offensively with a charged hose line and/or other applicable equipment. Back-up Crews operate with three given priorities. In coordination with the Incident Commander and in order of priority, they are assigned for the specific purpose of:

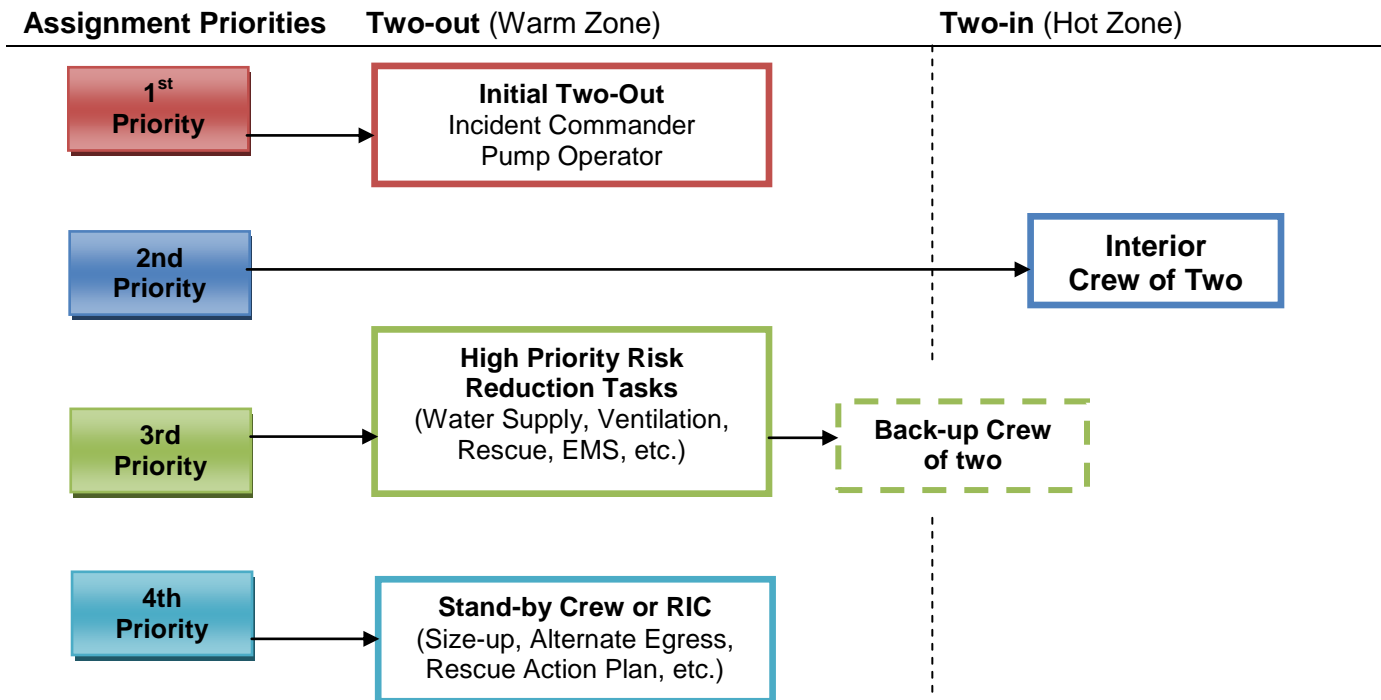
1. As dictated by fire and/or other hazardous conditions, protecting the means of egress for interior crews;
2. Serving as the Incident Commander's eyes and ears specifically to assess conditions within the Hot Zone, conveying risk assessment reconnaissance information to the Incident Commander, monitoring conditions, and if conditions begin to deteriorate, immediately initiating the appropriate form of intervention;
3. If priorities 1 and 2 are accounted for, conducting a primary search, or supplement initial fire attack efforts.

Although protecting egress is the Back-up Crew's primary responsibility, they may also support entry crews with hose advancement, victim removal, monitoring fire extension, etc.

As a general guideline, Back-up Crews are assigned with the following progression:

- if an entry crew is assigned to enter the hazard area, a Stand-by Crew or RIC must also be assigned as the Two-out provision for providing rapid intervention capability.
- If a RIC has been assigned, the Stand-by Crew can move up to become the Back-up Crew.

Deployment Order of Priority (Structure Fire Example) though maintaining Two-in/Two-out is a requirement, how the Incident Commander chooses to do so is flexible. The following flowchart provides a decision-making guideline for planning tactical assignments while maintaining Two-in/Two-out. The following sequence is intended to guide crew deployment in a manner that balances the need to initiate and establish a Two-out crew while also assigning crews to critical incident mitigation tasks within the hazard area.



Adjacent and Additional Crews

Case studies prove that a Stand-by Crew or RIC operating alone may not be sufficient when rescuing a trapped firefighter when extrication and/or rescue are required, Rescue efforts will likely require the support of additional crews to provide extrication equipment and rescue personnel. To create these supporting crews the Incident Commander can reassign adjacent crew or assign additional crews, generally a combination of the two.

Adjacent Crews - When a crew declares a "Mayday", the rescue efforts initiated by other crews operating in close proximity is nearly as effective as what a back-up crew can provide. Adjacent crews may be in a position to suspend their current assignment and immediately initiate rescue efforts. But if an adjacent crew is performing an activity that will protect rescue efforts, they should not be reassigned if suspending their current assignment would potentially compromise this protection. Reassignment of adjacent crews does not preclude the deployment of the Stand-by Crew or RIC. The primary role of the Stand-by Crew or RIC is to locate the firefighters in peril, provide them with emergency air management, and to facilitate their rescue.

Crews must not self-dispatch!

Additional Crews - When a crew declares a "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday", additional crews can be assigned by the Incident Commander to support rescue efforts or to replace adjacent crews who were re-assigned to the rescue efforts. Additional crews will generally be deployed from a staging area.

Resource Reserve - Incident Commanders should maintain a reserve of resources so that if a rapid intervention must be initiated, they have enough resources to support the rescue effort while continuing to sustain the original incident operations. Often this means calling for additional resources, second, or third alarms. Early consideration should be given to assure these reserve resources are on scene and available when needed.