

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY OPERATIONAL AREA

FIRE GROUND OPERATIONS POLICY #20-002

TOPIC: Structural Firefighting Two-In/Two-Out Requirement			
Revision Date October 23, 2016	Replaces CCC Op Area Policy #1 July 2008	Approved By County Chiefs	Pages 3
DISPOSITION: Operational Area Policy Manual			

INTRODUCTION:

The Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR 1910.134) and the California Code of Regulations (CCR, Title 8, Section 5144) specifically address the use of respirators in immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) atmospheres, including interior structural fires. In these atmospheres it requires that firefighters use SCBA and that a minimum of two firefighters work as a team inside the structure with a minimum of two firefighters on standby outside the IDLH atmosphere to provide assistance or initiate rescue. These requirements are known as the *Two-In/Two-Out* rule. This policy identifies the *Structural Firefighting Two-in/Two-Out* requirements.

BACKGROUND:

Too many fire fighters have died because of insufficient accountability and poor communications on the fire ground despite the regulations and standards adopted by OSHA regarding use of respiratory protection and requirements for entering an IDLH atmosphere. These standards addresses both and leaves no doubt those two-in/two-out requirements must be followed for fire fighter safety and compliance with the law.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Entry Team (Two-In)** - A team of two or more firefighters who enter an IDLH environment to conduct firefighting operations.
2. **IDLH Environment**- (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health). An atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere. Any structural fire beyond the incipient stage is considered to be an IDLH atmosphere by OSHA.
3. **Incipient Fire**- The initial or beginning stage of a fire which can be controlled by portable fire extinguishers, Class II standpipe, or small hose systems without need for protective clothing or SCBA.
4. **Rapid Intervention Company (RIC)** - A dedicated company of three or more firefighters who are assigned for rapid deployment to rescue firefighters.

5. **Two-Out Team (Two-Out)**- A team of two firefighters present outside the IDLH atmosphere in the initial stage of a structural fire attack; required to be established prior to interior operations by the Entry Team in an IDLH atmosphere. The Two-Out Team must be properly equipped to initiate rescue.

POLICY:

Anytime personnel enter an IDLH environment, there shall be two or more firefighters working together as the entry team. Before an entry team enters into an IDLH environment there shall be at least two (2) firefighters, wearing full PPE for the incident with SCBA, positioned outside the IDLH atmosphere serving as the two-out team.

PROCEDURE:

A. IDLH Entry

1. All firefighters entering an IDHL environment shall wear the appropriate PPE for the incident and SCBA.
2. No firefighter shall be left alone in an IDLH environment. Any entry team or company working in an IDLH environment shall leave the IDLH environment together as a team or company.
3. Entry Team firefighters shall maintain voice, physical or visual contact between each other at all times when in an IDLH environment. Radio communication shall not be used as the primary method of communicating between Entry Team members.
4. Each Entry Team firefighter shall have a portable radio that shall be set on the designated tactical frequency for the incident.

B. Two-Out Team

1. The Incident Commander shall designate the Two-out Team and communicate this to the Communications Center and other responding companies. This radio designation will be called the Two-Out team. (e.g. “Con Fire, Engine 4 is the Two-Out Team”).
2. At least one member of the Two-Out Team shall be responsible for maintaining an awareness of the Entry Team(s) and their operations while operating in an IDLH.
3. At least one member of the Two-Out Team shall remain in radio, visual, voice, or lifeline communications with the Entry Team(s) at all times when they are in an IDLH atmosphere.
4. Two-Out Team personnel shall have a portable radio and monitor the assigned tactical channel(s), and dispatch channel.
5. One member of the Two-Out Team is permitted to perform other tasks such as control of utilities, safety ladders, deployment of hose lines, or simple forcible entry. However, at no time will that task if abandoned place other firefighters at additional risk if rescue or other assistance is needed.

6. The Two-Out Team shall be wearing full PPE with SCBA, and have appropriate rescue equipment which should include as a minimum: deployed hoseline (size equivalent to or larger than the attack line and preferably charged) axe, halligan tool, and ropes.
7. The Two-Out Team is not a replacement for RIC. The objective of the Two-Out Team is to provide for firefighter accountability and rescue from the time of initial deployment of firefighters into the IDLH atmosphere until a RIC is established. A RIC shall be established as soon as practical.
8. Once the RIC has been assigned, a transfer of responsibility between the Two-out Team and RIC must occur. The Incident Commander will be notified of the transfer of responsibility and may reassign the Two-Out Team to another mission or to the RIC.
9. The Two-Out Team must notify the Incident Commander or the Communications Center prior to entering the IDLH atmosphere to initiate a firefighter rescue. The rescuers must enter the IDLH atmosphere as a team of two.

C. Rescue

1. If based on dispatch reports, scene reports, and /or size up indicators, a known imminent life-threatening situation exists where immediate rescue activities may prevent the loss of life or serious injury; the requirements for the Two-Out Team may be delayed. As resources become available a Two-Out or RIC team shall then be established.
2. Whenever the Incident Commander sends an Entry Team into an IDLH atmosphere without a Two-Out Team or RIC, the Communications Center shall be notified prior to entry. The Communications Center shall repeat the transmission so that all responding companies are aware of the situation.

E. Incident Review and Documentation

1. All circumstances related to Two-Out assignments, RIC assignments, and entries into IDLH atmospheres without the assignment of Two-Out Team or RIC shall be documented in the narrative report by the officer responsible for completing the report.
2. An investigation shall be conducted whenever an Entry Team enters into an IDLH atmosphere prior to the arrival and assignment of the Two-Out Team or RIC. The situation will be investigated by the Incident Commander who shall submit a written report of the incident through the chain of command.