



## Elgin Fire Department

Operations

Safety – Initial Rapid  
Intervention Crew (IRIC)

Policy # 2023.01

Issued: 12/16/05

**Subject:** Safety – Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC)

**Purpose:** This policy establishes procedures for ensuring the highest level of safety when conducting interior operations in an atmosphere that is Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH). This policy is written to comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulation 29 CFR 1910.134. This regulation is commonly known as the Two In/Two-Out rule.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all uniformed members of the Elgin Fire Department.

---

### Definitions:

#### Interior Structural Fire Fighting

The physical activity of fire suppression, rescue or both, inside of buildings or enclosed structures where fire involvement is beyond the incipient stage.

#### Incipient Stage Fire

A fire which is in the initial or beginning stage and which can be controlled or extinguished by portable extinguishers.

#### Immediately Dangerous To Life Or Health (IDLH)

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.

#### Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC)

A temporary team of at least two firefighters, fully equipped and trained, on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or rapid rescue, if needed. **An IRIC is only intended as a temporary, stand-by crew and is not intended for long term assignment where a formal Rapid Intervention Crew should be assigned.**

The term IRIC can be used synonymously with "Two-Out".

### Imminent Life-Threatening Situation

A situation in which immediate action is required to prevent the loss of life or serious injury before the team of five (5) firefighters is assembled and an IRIC has been established.

### Level 1 Protective Clothing

Department issue fire fighting boots, bunker pants, coat, hood, helmet, gloves, and SCBA.

### Level 2 Protective Clothing

Department issue fire fighting boots, bunker pants, coat, hood, helmet and gloves.

## **Procedure:**

The first arriving fire department unit is required to determine if the incident involves an IDLH atmosphere. Prior to initiating interior structural fire fighting operations in an IDLH atmosphere, a minimum of five (5) firefighters shall be assembled on scene:

- 2 – interior team members
- 2 – IRIC members
- 1 – pump operator

Prior to the assembly of five firefighters, appropriate actions may include:

- Conduct a comprehensive size-up
- Protect exposures
- Establish water supply
- Prepare for interior operations prior to the second-due company's arrival
- Place ground ladders
- Control of outside utilities

To facilitate the prompt establishment of the IRIC, all companies, including ambulances, shall don **Level 2** PPE (exception – helmet and gloves) prior to response.

Exception to this is permissible in the following situations:

- Driver/Operators are allowed to respond without donning their **Level 2** PPE
- Situations where donning **Level 2** PPE prior to arrival at the scene would not be safe (i.e. company is out of quarters at time of alarm and stopping to exit vehicle to don PPE would pose a risk to safety)

Driver/Operators not involved with pumping or water supply operations are to don **Level 1** PPE upon arrival at scene.

When a minimum of five (5) firefighters are assembled on scene, a two firefighter team, equipped with portable radios, may begin an interior attack. The interior attack can only be initiated when the two outside firefighters have donned **Level 1** PPE.

The initial attack crew will consist of at least two firefighters with a radio. While in the IDLH atmosphere the firefighters must remain in voice (not radio), visual or touch contact with each other.

1. Voice means that the firefighters must be close enough to speak to one another without requiring the use of a radio.
2. Visual means that the firefighters must be close enough to see each other.
3. Touch means close enough for physical contact.

The firefighters located outside the IDLH atmosphere shall be equipped with the appropriate tools and equipment that would contribute to firefighter rescue. The IRIC must actively monitor the status of the inside firefighters. The IRIC may be assigned an additional activity so long as they are able to immediately perform assistance or rescue activities. Examples of appropriate additional activities may include:

- Initial Incident Command
- Stretching of hoselines
- Ground level exterior ventilation
- Equipment retrieval
- Control of outside utilities
- Exposure protection and exterior fire attack (if appropriate)
- Placement of ground ladders

Additional duties assigned to an IRIC member shall not include pump operations. Additional activities will be restricted so as not to require the abandonment of the IRIC position directly outside the hazardous area.

In the event the IRIC must perform functions that would interfere with this assignment, they shall inform the Incident Commander who must either immediately assign another IRIC or advise interior personnel to exit the IDLH area until another IRIC can be assigned.

In a high rise (4 stories or more) building, a minimum of a four (4) member initial fire attack team shall ascend to the reported fire floor. Two team personnel are used as fire attack and the other two are to stand-by as the IRIC in the stairwell, outside of the IDLH. The firefighters outside the IDLH atmosphere must remain in communication (including, but not limited to, radio) with the firefighters in the IDLH atmosphere. Use of a signal line (rope) as a communications instrument for interior firefighting, is not permitted. NOTE - This does not preclude the use of rescue/search ropes used during structural searches.

## Exceptions:

### Incipient Stage Fire

Entry may be made while a fire is in the incipient stage. This is defined as a fire which can be controlled or extinguished by portable extinguishers.

### Imminent Life-Threatening Situation

**An imminent life-threatening situation exists when immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury before the team of five firefighters is assembled. This determination must be based on reasonable, justifiable indicators that are present and not general assumptions.**

Where initial arriving personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation, deviation from this procedure is permitted within the following parameters:

- Command shall notify Communications that a rescue is being attempted without an IRIC on scene. (Example – “Engine 4 is on the scene with a two-story house, fire showing, report of occupants on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Engine 4 will be making entry without an IRIC”.)
- Communications will notify all responding companies that entry is being made without an IRIC on scene and the location of the interior company. (Example – Elgin Fire to all responding companies, Engine 4 is on scene, going to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, attempting rescue without an IRIC.)
- After completing a search of the structure or rescue of the occupants, firefighters shall withdraw from the structure until Two-In/Two-Out procedures can be implemented with the arrival of additional personnel. Communications shall be notified when the firefighters have exited the building.
- All exceptions to the Two-In/Two-Out policy shall be documented on the approved form by the company officer through the chain of command, to the Fire Chief.

By the order of: Michael W. Falone  
Fire Chief

Revised: 12/16/05



# MEMO

**To:** Chief Falese

**From:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject:** Report of entry into IDLH without Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC) established

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

The company officer operating at an incident within the exceptions outlined in Policy # 2023.01 must submit a written report, through the Battalion Chief, detailing the specifics of the incident:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Alarm Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

The following conditions existed that caused me to direct my company to enter an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmosphere prior to the establishment of an Initial Rapid Intervention Crew:

Rescue:     \_\_\_ Observation of trapped occupant(s)  
              \_\_\_ Bystanders advising firefighters of the need for rescue  
              \_\_\_ Residence, during late night or early morning hours, with signs of occupancy

Fire Attack: \_\_\_ The IDLH atmosphere was limited to a structural compartment which provided significant barrier between firefighters and the IDLH atmosphere

Narrative specific to Policy # 2023.01 indicating my reasoning for the exception;

---

---

---

---

Company Officer (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Battalion Chief (signature): \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant Chief of Operations (signature): \_\_\_\_\_