



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the guidelines and procedures for the deployment and use of Russellville Fire Department Rescue Task Force in response to active shooter incidents.

POLICY

1. Rescue Task Force (RTF) – A group of resources deployed to provide point-of-wound care to victims where there is an on-going ballistic or explosive threat. The task force treats, stabilizes, and removes injured patients in a rapid manner while wearing ballistic protective equipment and operating under the protection of members of a law enforcement organization. The typical RTF is comprised of four-five personnel: two trained law enforcement officers and two or three Russellville firefighters. When possible, at least one of the firefighters should be a paramedic. The fire department RTF positions will be staffed by members of fire companies.

The RTF can be deployed to the following incident types:

- Active shooter in a school, business, mall, conference, special event, etc.
- Any incident in which there is the possibility of an on-going ballistic or explosive threat.

2. Hazard Zones

- Hot Zone – An area where there is a known hazard or life threat that is direct and immediate. An example of this would be any area not cleared by law enforcement personnel that may contain an active shooter. RTFs will not be deployed into a Hot Zone.

- Warm Zone – An area that has been cleared by law enforcement personnel and where there is a minimal or mitigated threat. RTFs deploy into this zone to locate and treat victims.

- Cold Zone – An area where there is little or no threat due to geography or having been secured by law enforcement personnel. The triage, treatment, and transport units will be established in the Cold Zone.

3. Contact Team – A team of law enforcement personnel assigned to advance toward the threat and initiate contact with the active shooter to prevent further injury or loss of life. The contact team performs a primary clearing of areas as they advance.

4. Casualty Collection Point – The location to which patients are evacuated from the Warm Zone to be triaged. This area should be located in the Cold Zone and serves as a marshalling area for standard MCI actions to begin.

Deployment of Rescue Task Forces

Incidents that involve an active shooter or any type of on-going ballistic or explosive threat will require the fire department to operate in a Unified Command system with law enforcement. The activation and deployment of RTFs will be at the discretion of the fire department member of the Unified Command once law

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RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
POLICY MANUAL

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enforcement personnel have determined that portions of the scene meet the Warm Zone criteria and may contain victims.

The tactical gear and medical supplies that are needed to deploy the RTFs will be carried on fire apparatus. Each engine and ladder company will carry enough RTF equipment to outfit at least two RTF members. When the need arises to deploy RTFs, the Incident Commander must request the number of fire companies that are needed to staff the RTFs.

The number of fire companies requested to deploy as RTFs will vary depending on the magnitude of the incident and the number of victims that are anticipated. Small incidents may allow for RTFs to be deployed utilizing personnel already at the scene. Moderate sized incidents will require the Incident Commander to request, through Dispatch, the number of fire companies that are needed to fill the RTFs that will be deployed at the incident. Large incidents that involve multiple patients will require the Incident Commander to request all available on duty resources.

Criteria that should be used in determining whether to request all available resources include:

1. An unknown number of patients
2. An active and on-going threat
3. A large scale incident

Communications

In order to maintain a redundant communications system throughout the incident the fire and police members of an RTF will operate on separate radio channels. The fire department members of the RTF will operate on the fire department channel that they are assigned by the Incident Commander and will communicate directly with the Rescue Group Supervisor, Rescue Branch Director (if established) or Incident Commander. The law enforcement members of the RTF will operate on the channel that they are assigned by the Incident Commander and will communicate with law enforcement supervisors.

The Russellville Fire Department members of the RTF will identify themselves on the radio by the task force designation that they are assigned by the Incident Commander, such as "Rescue Task Force 1" or "Rescue Task Force 2."

Equipment

The minimum equipment that a fire department RTF member must have in order to deploy includes:

1. Kevlar helmet
2. Tactical body armor
3. Radio
4. Tactical medical kit
5. Exam Gloves

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Fire Chief

2 of 3



Operations

Once a fire company has been assigned as part of a RTF they will retrieve the mandated RTF equipment and report to the designated location to be formed into an RTF with law enforcement personnel.

RTFs will move in and out of the building through entrances and corridors that have been cleared by the initial contact teams. The RTFs will operate only within those areas of the building designated by the Incident Commander as meeting the Warm Zone criteria. All members of a RTF must remain within sight and sound contact of one another with one law enforcement officer providing front security for the team and one providing rear security during movement. The law enforcement members of the RTF must remain in a position to provide effective defensive cover fire for the team at all times.

The initial RTFs will be deployed into the Warm Zone with the purpose of locating and stabilizing patients according to the guidelines of the Commission on Tactical Emergency Casualty Care. These initial teams will focus on providing point-of-wounding patient stabilization that includes stopping major hemorrhages and addressing airway and breathing issues. The initial RTFs must exercise discretion in the amount of time spent with each patient based on the condition of the patient, the situation, and the number of additional anticipated patients, keeping in mind that their primary goal is to move rapidly through the Warm Zone, providing stabilization techniques to the greatest number of patients possible in a short period of time in order to maximize their effectiveness. It is the responsibility of these initial teams to notify the Rescue Group Supervisor or Incident Commander of the number of patients that they encounter and to prioritize patients for rapid removal by follow-up RTFs. Once a RTF exhausts their medical supplies they should notify the Incident Commander and begin the patient evacuation process to the Casualty Collection Point.

Based on the circumstances of the incident, additional RTFs may be deployed to remove the stabilized patients to the exterior Casualty Collection Point, to assist the initial RTF with patient treatment, or to replace the initial teams once their medical supplies are exhausted.

Once patients reach the Casualty Collection Point they will be triaged and managed according to the guidelines established in 203.06 Mass Casualty/Triage Incidents.

The third member of each fire company, if not equipped to staff an RTF position because of a lack of PPE, should remain in the Cold/Warm Zone Corridor and perform the following functions:

1. Assist RTF members in donning RTF gear and equipment
2. Position apparatus as needed to provide cover for Casualty Collection Points
3. Direct uninjured civilians to safe areas
4. Direct/assist walking wounded to the nearest Casualty Collection Point
5. Complete other ancillary tasks as needed

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

If the area in which a RTF is operating changes from a Warm Zone to a Hot Zone due to a direct and immediate threat the RTF should seek appropriate cover and determine if evacuation from the building is necessary. If any member of a RTF is injured during operations, immediate evacuation of that RTF will occur.

Approved

Fire Chief