

To: Wayne County Fire & EMS Dispatch Centers

From: Chief Ballentine

Date: November 9, 2005

Subject: New Dispatch Terminology



Recently many Fire Departments in Wayne County have implemented a new tactical operation that is referred to as a “**Rapid Intervention Team**” or “**R.I.T.**” To date a request for a “RIT Assignment” has been made by the Incident Commander for at fires in Wooster Township, Kidron, Apple Creek, and most recently in Orrville. The request for a RIT, which is a new term for many Dispatchers, has resulted in some minor confusion making it clear that we needed to provide some information regarding RIT and their deployment to all Dispatchers. The purpose of this memo is to provide you with information on some of the new terminology, give a basic explanation of the concept, and discuss dispatching expectations regarding RIT.

The Rapid Intervention Team concept has been in place in the Fire Service for many years; however, we are just now beginning to put it into operation in Wayne County. The Rapid Intervention Team also referred to as “RIT” or “RIT Team” is a tactical team of specially trained and equipped firefighters dedicated specifically to assist operational firefighting crews working an incident that become injured, trapped or lost. Simply put “rescuers for the rescuers”. The RIT concept has been discussed in depth at numerous Wayne County Fire Chiefs Association meetings, so all departments who are interested in participating in the concept are familiar with it. Presently Central, Orrville, and Wooster Township have operational Rapid Intervention Teams. However, many other departments are working toward having operational Rapid Intervention Teams.

Due to the fact that very few, if any Departments in Wayne County have the resources to provide such a team from their initial response of personnel, mutual aid will be called to fill the RIT assignment. At the present time it will be the responsibility of the on scene Incident Commander to contact Dispatch and request a RIT assignment. The IC will request a RIT assignment and will identify from what department the RIT is being requested. The Dispatcher will then notify the requested department that “Mutual Aid Has Been Requested for a RIT Assignment” and give the incident location. All participating departments will then respond per the RIT SOG as adopted by the Wayne County Fire Chiefs Association. In the future it is expected that the RIT Assignment will be added to the MABAS Books to aid in the dispatch process.

In the event an emergency situation arises on the fireground involving a lost, trapped or injured firefighter the “MAYDAY” call will be used. The transmission of the MAYDAY call will result in activation of the RIT by the IC along with the immediate issuance of a “Signal 99” request of Total Radio Silence except for communications dealing with the specific MAYDAY emergency.

Attached is a copy of Page 26 of the Wayne Fire Dispatchers Manual that lists specific information regarding Fireground Emergency Signals. Paragraph 5 “Fire Dispatch Action” details the sequence of action to be taken in the event a MAYDAY is transmitted. Please note the sentence following the second example listed: “In a MAYDAY or Signal 99 situation, dispatch may be requested to activate the EMERGENCY ALERT TONE.”

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It is the desire of the Wayne County Fire Chief's Association to mandate that the EMERGENCY ALERT TONE be used any time a MAYDAY or Signal 99 is transmitted. The Chief's Association believes that the EMERGENCY ALERT TONE is of critical importance to catch the attention of all monitoring units to insure the MAYDAY and Signal 99 are heard and appropriate actions taken. If follow up to this memo The Chief's Association will contact all Dispatch Centers to insure the SOG as shown on the attached page is in place at each center.

If you have any questions regarding Rapid Intervention Teams or the Dispatch process or feel there needs to be additional discussion and information please feel free to contact Chief Ballentine, Chief Burns or Chief Delpropost.