

Selecting RIC Tools

The complexity of a RIC emergency will dictate the required tools and equipment. Unfortunately, the true complexity of the RIC emergency is often unknown until the downed fire fighter is located. That's why it is essential to assemble a fully functional and adequate tool cache every time your company is assigned to a RIC.

Five Considerations

When assembling a tool cache, consider the five main RIC operations:

- Ingress/Egress
- Search
- Air delivery
- Gaining access to a downed fire fighter
- Packaging a downed fire fighter

Specific tools and equipment will vary by agency. An ongoing and thorough size up of the structure will also dictate any other tools or equipment that may be required.

The RIC tool cache belongs to the RIC. Do not allow other resources to remove any items from your cache. The tools and equipment used by the RIC can mean the difference between life and death for a downed fire fighter. The RIC tool cache should be fully equipped and ready to deploy at all times.

Ingress and Egress Tools

- Irons (flathead axe and Halligan)
 - Forcible entry
 - Creating an opening
- Chain saw
 - Removing doors
 - Enlarging openings
 - Creating an opening
- Circular saw
 - Removing bars
 - Removing metal doors
 - Removing locks
 - Enlarging openings on masonry/metal buildings
 - Creating openings on masonry/metal buildings
- Reciprocating saw
 - Removing bars
 - Removing locks
 - Enlarging openings

- Creating an opening
- Cutting torch
 - Removing bars
 - Removing rebar
 - Removing locks
- Through the lock tools
 - Removing locks and hardware
- Bolt cutters
 - Removing chains
 - Removing pad locks

Search Tools

- Handled tools
 - Allows further reach from anchor points
 - Allows for greater person-to-person reach
- Standard rope
 - Provides an anchor in a rapid search
- Search lines
 - Provides an anchor for a rapid search
 - Provides a reference of depth into the structure
 - Provides directional reference for the RIC once inside the structure
 - Provides multiple anchor points for the RIC once inside the structure
- Webbing
 - Allows further reach from anchor points
 - Allows for greater person-to-person reach
- Thermal imager
 - Allows for greater visibility within the structure during search
 - Allows the RIC to identify hazards, exits, and fire fighters within the structure
 - Allows the RIC to identify temperatures within the structure

Air Delivery Tools

- Spare SCBA
 - Equipped with spare mask
 - Allows for regulator or mask changeover
- RIC air
 - Equipped with spare mask
 - Equipped with a universal air connector (UAC)
 - Identify whether your department and neighboring departments comply with NFPA 1981: Standard On Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus For Emergency Services (2019 edition), stating that all new

SCBAs will have a standard universal air connection (UAC) regardless of the manufacturer.

- Equipped with an additional mask mounted regulator (MMR)
- Allows downed fire fighters to have their own air to breath
- Trans fill lines
 - Utilized for SCBAs with UAC
- Buddy breathing system
 - Present on many newer SCBAs
 - Downed fire fighter is now utilizing the same air as a RIC member
- Plastic tubing
 - Can be used as a mask-to-mask buddy breathing system if no other air delivery equipment is available

Access Tools

- Wire cutters
 - Retrieval of an entangled fire fighter
 - Spring loaded
- Pneumatic lifting tools
 - Heavy lifting in an entrapment situation
- Hydraulic lifting tools
 - Heavy lifting in an entrapment situation
- Pry bars
 - Heavy lifting in an entrapment situation
- Saw (chain, circular, or reciprocating)
 - Removal of debris from around a downed fire fighter

Much of the equipment used to remove heavy debris off a trapped fire fighter is heavy and cumbersome. Searching with these heavy items will slow progress and cause fatigue. The RIC should stage heavy equipment at a strategic point for rapid deployment when needed.

Packaging

- Tubular webbing
 - Lightweight and versatile
 - Can be used as a harness
 - Can be used as a drag handle
- Rescue loops
 - Lightweight and versatile
 - Rapidly deployed
 - Provides drag and lifting handles
- Drag devices
 - Typically lightweight and versatile

- Rapidly deployed
- Protects the downed fire fighter from any further entanglement by encapsulating them
- Rescue litter
 - Strong and sturdy
 - Large and cumbersome
 - Securing the downed fire fighter in the basket can be difficult in a limited visibility environment
 - Provides a means to move tools and equipment
- SKED
 - Slides well on most surfaces
 - Lightweight but bulky
 - Provides multiple drag and carrying handles
 - Can be difficult to deploy and secure a downed fire fighter in a low visibility environment
 - Protects the downed fire fighter from any further entanglement by encapsulating them