



New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association

1 Smallwood Avenue, Belleville, New Jersey 07109



Via Fax and Regular Mail

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July 2, 2007

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RE: Proposed New Rules: N.J.A.C. 5:75-2.5 - 2.10

Good Morning, Mr. Ticktin:

The New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association (NJDFCA) at its statewide meeting on Monday, June 4, 2007, expressed concern, of the proposed new rules, specifically N.J.A.C. 5:75-2.8 (a) and (f), "Rapid Intervention Crews (RICs)", as put forth by the Division of Fire Safety.

In 5:75-2.8 (a), the wording, "IF THE CIRCUMSTANCES DICTATE IT, A RAPID INTERVENTION CREW/COMPANY (RIC) SHALL BE DESIGNATED TO STANDBY IN A STATE OF READINESS, etc., etc." leaves the impression that a RIC Team is not to be dispatched on the first alarm assignment of a working fire, hazardous material incident, trench rescue, or any other emergency incident where the JDLH ATMOSPHERE, IS DANGEROUS TO FIREFIGHTERS OR EMERGENCY PERSONNEL.

Numerous, firefighter fatality investigations citations, issued by the Center of Disease Control/National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (CDC/NIOSH), have cited Fire Departments nationwide for starting interior fireground operations before a RIC Team was present in the absence of a known rescue.

We, therefore, strongly request that the wording in N.J.C.A. 5:75-2.8 (a) be changed to read as follows: **That a Rapid Intervention Crew/Company (RIC) shall respond on the first alarm of a working fire, hazmat incident, trench rescue, or any emergency where the IDLH atmosphere is dangerous to firefighters or emergency personnel.**

An Association of Battalion & Deputy Chief Officers

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In N.J.A.C. 5:75-2.8 (f), the wording, "FIRE DEPARTMENTS SHALL DEVELOP AND UTILIZE WRITTEN STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES FOR USING RICs, INCLUDING SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR MEMBERS WHO WILL SERVE ON THE RIC." establishes that the guidelines for RIC operations be created by each individual Fire Department and **not by the State of New Jersey for RIC Team operations, training and equipment.**

The majority of Fire Departments in the State of New Jersey, both career and volunteer, use Mutual Aid for their RIC/FAST Teams, which respond on the first alarm.

If this proposed regulation stands, the Incident Commander would have to know the standard operating procedures/guidelines and training of the surrounding Fire Departments RIC Teams for him to operate safely at the scene of an emergency.

We, therefore, strongly request that N.J.A.C. 5:75-2.8 (f) be withdrawn from the regulations for additional study or **if the Division of Fire Safety agrees, the regulations should be changed to indicate that the minimum State guidelines, training and equipment should be followed by all Fire Departments in the State of New Jersey.**

Respectfully yours,

Charles Aughenbaugh, Jr.
Deputy Fire Chief (Ret.)
President
New Jersey Deputy Fire Chiefs Association

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