

Special Operations, SOG 4.00

REHABILITATION

1. Intent and Purpose

To provide guidance on the implementation and use of a rehabilitation process as a requirement of the Incident Management System (ICS) at the scene of a fire, other emergency, or training exercise. It will ensure that personnel who might be suffering the effects of metabolic heat buildup, dehydration, physical exertion, and/or extreme weather receive evaluation and rehabilitation during emergency operations.

2. Rules

- a. Rehabilitation shall commence when fire/emergency operations and/or training exercises pose a health and safety risk.
- b. Rehabilitation shall be established for large-scale incidents, long-duration and/or physically demanding incidents, and extreme temperatures.
- c. The Incident Commander shall establish rehabilitation according to the circumstances of the incident. The rehabilitation process shall include the following:
 - Rest
 - Hydration to replace lost body fluids
 - Cooling (passive and/or active)
 - Warming
 - Medical monitoring
 - Emergency medical care if required
 - Relief from extreme climactic conditions
 - Calorie and electrolyte replacement
 - Accountability
 - Release

3. Responsibilities

- a. The Incident Commander shall be responsible for the following:
 - Include rehabilitation in incident/event size-up
 - Establish a rehabilitation group to reduce adverse physical effects on firefighters while operating during fire/emergencies, training exercises, and extreme weather conditions.
 - Designate and assign a supervisor to manage rehabilitation
 - Assure sufficient resources are assigned to rehabilitation
 - Ensure EMS personnel are available for emergency medical care of firefighters as required.
- b. The rehabilitation manager shall be responsible for the following:
 - Clearly identify themselves and the rehabilitation group location
 - Ensure area accommodation, accessibility, water supply, and protection from the elements and the media
 - Set up away from hazardous conditions.

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- Ensure personnel in rehabilitation “dress down” by removing gear
 - Provide required resources for rehabilitation
 - Time personnel to ensure that they receive 10 to 20 minutes of rest
 - Ensure personnel rehydrate themselves
 - Maintain accountability at all times (Rehab Group– Company Check In / Out Sheet: Appendix D)
- c. Company officers shall be responsible for the following:
- Be familiar with and monitor personnel for signs/symptoms of heat/cold stress
 - Provide access to rehabilitation for company members as needed
 - Ensure accountability of firefighters, maintaining company intact
- d. Crew members shall be responsible for the following:
- Be familiar with the signs/symptoms of heat/cold stress
 - Promptly inform the company officer when members require rehabilitation and/or relief from assigned duties
 - Maintain unit integrity
- e. EMS personnel shall be responsible for the following:
- Report to Incident Commander and obtain rehabilitation requirements
 - Coordinate with rehabilitation manager
 - Check vital signs, monitor for heat stress and signs of medical issues
 - Document medical monitoring and medical care
 - Provide emergency medical care and transportation as required
4. Procedures
- a. All personnel shall maintain hydration on an ongoing basis.
 - b. Members shall be sent to rehabilitation as required.
 - c. All members shall be sent to rehabilitation following the use of two 30-minute SCBA cylinders or one 45 to 60-minute SCBA cylinder. Shorter times might be considered during extreme weather conditions.
 - d. Active cooling shall be applied when temperatures, conditions, and/or workload create the potential for heat stress.
 - e. In hot, humid conditions, a minimum of 10 minutes of active cooling shall be applied following the use of the second and each subsequent SCBA cylinder.
 - f. Personnel in rehabilitation shall rest for at least 10 to 20 minutes prior to being reassigned or released.
 - g. EMS personnel shall provide medical monitoring and emergency medical care as per medical protocol.
 - h. Any abnormal vital signs should be monitored frequently during rehab.

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- i. Personnel who are weak or fatigued with pale clammy skin, low blood pressure, nausea, headache, or dizziness shall be assessed by EMS personnel.
- j. Personnel experiencing chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or nausea shall be transported to a medical facility for treatment.
- k. Personnel transported to a medical facility for treatment shall be accompanied by a department representative.
- l. Members should drink water during rehabilitation and nutritional supplements/snacks or meals provided as required during longer duration incidents.
- m. No tobacco use shall be permitted in or near the rehabilitation area.