



International Society of Fire Service Instructors

Press Release

October 30, 2013

Given the latest research in fire dynamics and the potential impact on firefighter safety, the ISFSI board of directors unanimously releases this position statement. The ISFSI encourages all fire departments to incorporate the fire dynamics research into their tactical operations through any and all means necessary.

"Given the potential to improve firefighter safety, we believe fire departments should review their tactical operations and update their tactics. The ISFSI is proud to stand behind those conducting this research and will continue to support their efforts," said ISFSI president Doug Cline.

International Society of Fire Service Instructors Position Statement - Fire Dynamic Research in Tactical Operations

The International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI) states its position on the importance of recent research in fire dynamics and firefighting tactics, as conducted by the National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST) and Underwriters Laboratories (UL). The ISFSI believes that fire departments should take action to adjust their tactical plans and training programs to incorporate this research into their emergency response operations. Additionally, the ISFSI believes that professional standards should be updated to reflect the latest information in fire dynamic research as soon as possible.

Given the information from the research, the ISFSI takes the following positions:

Size-Up

Size-up must occur at every fire. Consideration must be given to the resources available and situational conditions, such as weather, fire location, size of the fire and building, and the construction features. A tactical plan for that fire must be developed, communicated and implemented.



Ventilation

Fire departments should manage and control the openings to the structure to limit fire growth and spread, and to control the flow path of inlet air and fire gases during tactical operations. All ventilation must be coordinated with suppression activities. Uncontrolled ventilation allows additional oxygen into the structure which may result in a rapid increase in the fire development and increased risk to firefighters due to increased heat release rates.

Suppression

Given the fuel rich environment that the fire service operates in, water should be applied to the fire as soon as possible. In many cases, water application through an exterior opening into a fire compartment may be the best first action, prior to committing firefighting resources to the interior.

Fire departments should cool the interior spaces of a fire building with water from the safest location possible, prior to committing personnel into spaces with, or adjacent to, fully developed or smoldering (ventilation limited) fire conditions.

Rapid Intervention

Fire department rapid intervention procedures should be updated to provide water on the fire as soon as possible and ventilation openings controlled during firefighter "Mayday" incidents.

Tactical Applications

Fire departments should consider revised tactical guidelines for suppression, such as the S.L.I.C.E. - R.S. acronym. This stands for the following:

Sequential actions

Size up
Locate the fire
Identify and control the flow path
Cool the heated space from a safe location
Extinguish

Actions of opportunity that may occur at any time

Rescue
Salvage



The ISFSI acknowledges the resistance to change, but believes it is important for fire departments to act on this information in a timely manner to enhance firefighter safety. Additionally, the ISFSI believes that chief officers, instructors, company officers, firefighters and all entities that support the fire service should make incorporating the latest in fire dynamic research into regular tactical operations a high priority.

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