TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT

C-102 Vent Enter Isolate Search - VEIS

Emergency Manual

Date Revised: 02/01/2018

Last Modified: 09/27/2024 10:05

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Purpose

Establish criteria for the use of Vent, Enter, Isolated Search (VEIS) operations.

Definition

Vent, Enter, Isolate Search (VEIS) is when firefighters either create openings, or break windows to gain access from an exterior position to carry out a primary, targeted, area-limited search in a high-risk area of the fire building. VEIS may initially be conducted with or without the protection of a hose line, and usually away from the initial area of fire attack. It is a strategy that is hazardous, but in turn, may yield great rewards for the search team.

Venting actions should be based on the following three objectives:

- Vent for Life
- Vent for Fire
- Vent for Safety

The concept behind VEIS is simply meeting the primary objective for venting, which is to vent to rescue “likely” victims or make conditions more tenable for “likely” victims. Preservation of life is the main objective on the fire ground.

Situational Use

- Remember, the general rule is that there should be no delay in fire suppression efforts. It is generally ideal to get water on the main body of fire as quickly as possible. Remember, rescuing a victim from a fire can happen one of two ways – remove the victim from the fire, or remove the fire from the victim.

- VEIS should be implemented on fires where there is a ‘reliable witness’; generally another occupant of the fire building that has escaped and is reporting another or other victims still trapped. Another ‘reliable witness’ may be someone, who convinces you they have previously “saw” or “heard” a victim inside the fire building. Use of your best professional judgment as to the ‘reliability’ of the witness must be employed.

Policy/Procedure

1. Based on all size-up factors, including the information gleaned from the ‘reliable witness’, identify the ‘target window’. Give radio report as listed below.

2. If laddering the window is necessary, place the tip of the ladder at the window sill, at or near the 60 degree ‘rescue angle’ which will facilitate ingress, egress and victim removal.

3. Take the window completely out with hand tool (start at top of window and work your way to bottom). Turn the target window into a door. Remember to protect yourself from the products of combustion likely to vent from the opening. Observe conditions throughout taking window, and let it ‘blow’ for 5-10 seconds.

- **NOTE:** once window is vented, if signs of impending flashover are present, do not enter window). Impending flashover conditions indicate a ‘NO GO’ situation.

4. Once target window is cleared, and conditions are favorable for entry, ‘sweep’ floor immediately below windowsill, then ‘sound’ floor for stability.

5. Now, make entry into room as quickly as possible, staying as low in window as possible.

6. The ‘oriented firefighter’ will now stand at window, on outside of building, and immediately begin to verbally communicate with the ‘search firefighter’. The ‘oriented firefighter’, if equipped with the Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC), will immediately scan the room looking for the ‘search firefighter’, any victims in the room, and monitor smoke/heat and fire conditions.

7. The ‘search firefighter’, once in room, should immediately proceed to the room door, and if conditions permit, ‘sweep’ the hallway immediately outside the target room, make quick observation of conditions, then immediately close the door to cut off the flow path of the fire.

8. If the door is closed upon approach, decide, based on conditions, if it is safe and/or necessary to open door and sweep the hallway.

9. Once door is closed, now turn around and conduct a rapid, primary search of the room. If a victim is located, immediately notify command, request additional resources, and develop and implement a rescue plan.

10. Ordinarily, the ‘search firefighter’ will egress back out the window upon completing the primary search. Firefighters performing VEIS must remember this search is limited to the ‘target room’. Attached closets and master baths are considered part of the target room.

- **NOTE:** Pay attention to conditions throughout this operation, if conditions deteriorate to near-flashover, you are required to abort the mission before you become trapped!

VEIS Radio Report and Benchmarks:

- Provide normal radio size-up to include the words ‘working fire’ which will prompt the dispatch of a Life Squad if one has not already been dispatched.
- If performing VEIS only, say you are doing VEIS – be location specific.
- If you are going to attack the fire and perform VEIS simultaneously, say that you are doing ‘Fast attack-rescue’.
    - **NOTE** – Upon hearing a first-due company performing either VEIS or ‘fast-attack rescue’, the second-due company is to immediately come up and assume command and support the operation at hand.
- Once search firefighter makes entry into window, announce, “Entry made”.
- If and when victim(s) found, announce, “Victim found”.
- Call for ‘Additional resources’.
- Give a “PAR” on exit of the structure.

Tool / Equipment Recommendations:

- 6’ hook
- Axe
- Halligan bar
- Flashlight
- Thermal Imaging camera (TIC)
- PPE & SCBA (required)
- Portable radio (required)

See Also:

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Last update: **09/27/2024 10:05**