

Low Angle Rope Rescue Best Practices

1. All personnel will respond to the station in accordance with the Response of Personnel Best Practice. Apparatus will then respond in accordance with the Apparatus Response Best Practice.
2. Only personnel on the posted "Rope Rescue Qualified List" should be in key positions; "Medic, Primary Rescuer, Rope Operations (TRO), Safety and Edge". If a rope operation will be conducted the Oswego County Rope Rescue Team should be activated for a Level 4 response. Additional resources may be utilized by the Oswego County Rope Rescue Team.
3. All personnel going over the edge shall have a minimum PPE of Class III Harness, Rescue Helmet, Rope Gloves, pants and boots.
4. Personnel within ten feet of the edge will be secured to an anchor with a Class III harness and a travel restraint system. Any personnel not in the above PPE and not tied to an anchor shall stay a minimum of ten feet from the edge at all times.
5. First arriving rope personal shall establish a medic line with a standalone "bomb proof" anchor and send a Medic down to the patient to recon the rescue area and provide patient condition. The medic will provide detailed information to TRO to help determine rescue method. The medic, as soon as possible, shall secure the patient to the medic line and then determine if it is a Rescue or Recovery.
6. While the Medic is responding to the patient a Haul line and belay lines should be established. Both lines will have separate anchor systems (bomb proof). Based off information from the medic, the TRO shall decide if the rescue will be lowering or raising the patient to safety.
7. The Rescue Team should be made up of a minimum of four personnel. The Rescue Team, shall at a minimum, bring a strokes basket, two spare litter straps, patient anchor webbing, spare webbing (20'), spare D-Ring carabiners. The Primary Rescuer will lead the team to the medic/victim.
8. When the rescue team arrives at the patient, the patient will be transferred into the stokes basket and secured with two separate systems to the main line. The Medic will switch to the litter strap on the stokes basket prior to disconnecting from medic line. The Medic should make sure the medic line is free to be hauled up prior to hauling of the Rescue Team.
9. The haul team shall, when confirmed with rescue team, switch to a rising system using Mechanical Advantage (MA). This shall be a minimum of a 3:1 system and should be a 5:1 system or greater if haul team personnel is limited. This system shall be set and reset until Rescue Team has cleared the edge by ten feet.
10. Once all personnel and victims are clear of the edge all equipment shall be inspected prior to being put away. A rope log shall be completed any time rope is loaded or out of its bag. This rope log shall be kept in the Special Ops Trailer with the equipment at all times.

Rope Rescue

Common Terms/ Phrases Used:

Phrases

Commands shall utilize a three-way communication system to reduce confusion and miscommunication.

Ready to Haul (?), Haul Team Ready (!), Haul!

Stop, Set, Reset, Haul (repeated as needed)

Belay Ready (?), Belay On (!), On Belay!

Positions:

Medic: This is the first rescuer over the edge. This should be at least an EMT with rope experience.

Primary Rescuer: Is the lead on the team of rescuers that is tied to the stokes basket.

TRO: Technical Rescue Officer (Operations), Typically the most experience rope team member.

Safety Officer (Safety): Must have specific knowledge and responsibility for the identification, evaluation and, where possible, correction of hazardous conditions and unsafe conditions. Will have a hands-on approach and will physically touch all hardware in the systems prior to loading and use for accuracy.

Edge: Is a division of Safety which works at the slope edge. Edge maintains communication and whenever possible sight of the rescuers. Edge shall also monitor personnel that may get within the 10 ft edge perimeter.

Definitions

Belay: The act of protecting the climber, rescue professional, or subject in the event of a fall.

Bomb proof: have been determined to be sufficient for all component requirements and will hold any load or fall (while maintaining a margin of safety at all times).

Rope Rescue Qualified: Minimum qualifications for the task to be completed. Training shall be NYS OFPC or equivalent. (In house training following NYS OFPC curriculum with skills and exams or approved other)

- Rescue Tech Basic – Low and Steep angle (15° - 65°)
- Rope Operations & Technician – High Angle (65° - 90°)