

CALLING A MAY DAY STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

APPROVED: December 2007

I. SCOPE

To establish a procedure to be used when calling for assistance, and to notify all personnel on the emergency scene, that an imminent life-threatening situation exists.

II. DEFINITIONS

Mayday - a radio term used to alert the Incident Commander or other persons on the emergency scene that personnel are in an imminent life-threatening situation.

Personnel Accountability Report or Roll Call (PAR) - a term used to track and to report the location, status, and welfare of personnel assigned to a given crew.

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) - a team specifically designated by the Incident Commander at the scene of an emergency beyond the initial stages, consisting of a minimum of three personnel, one preferably being a company officer. The RIT shall be primarily available for the rescue of Fire Department members should the need arise. Depending on the size and complexity of the incident, the Incident Commander shall establish one or more RIT. The RIT normally replaces or enhances the 2in, 2out, which was required during the initial stages of the incident. (See 2in 2out SOG.)

Mayday Alert Tone - a distinct audible signal broadcast over all radio frequencies involved with the incident by the dispatch center, for 7 seconds, to notify personnel that a member involved in operations is missing, trapped, or in need of assistance.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Verbal Report of a Missing Member(s)

1. When the Group/Division/Sector Officer is notified or becomes aware that a member(s) may be missing, he/she shall immediately contact the Incident Commander.
2. The Group/Division/Sector Officer and Unit Officer from the missing member's(s) last assignment shall ensure that a systematic search is conducted in the area of the member's(s) last known location.

3. The Incident Commander shall immediately request that the dispatch center transmit the Mayday alert tone.
4. Dispatch shall immediately transmit the Mayday alert tone on all frequencies involved with the incident for 7 seconds.
5. The Incident Commander shall make an announcement to all units identifying the missing member(s), his/her/their last known location and directing anyone knowing the whereabouts of the missing member(s) to immediately notify Command or another designated officer (preferably the Accountability Officer) via radio.
6. All radio traffic on the fireground radio channel not associated with the Mayday or PAR shall cease.
7. The Incident Commander shall designate an officer to assume responsibility for monitoring the fireground radio channel from a location on the incident scene that is away from distractions and other noises.
8. The Incident Commander shall confirm, via direct radio contact, that all units and the Sector Officer from the missing member's(s) last assignment and/or any unit currently operating in the immediate area are aware he/she/they are now missing. The Incident Commander shall also complete a PAR of these specific units during this radio conversation.
9. The Incident Commander shall deploy the RIT to assist with conducting a systematic search in the area of his/her/their last known location. If the missing member(s) is accounted for after the announcement, and after the systematic search of the area, the RIT will be directed to return to their previous location and standby.
10. The Incident Commander shall designate a secondary RIT whenever the primary crew is deployed.
11. The Incident Commander shall provide the Accountability Officer with the PAR for the units he/she contacted. The Accountability Officer shall conduct a PAR of all other Groups/Divisions/Sectors (pausing as necessary so that a radio call for help can be heard) to ensure that all other members are accounted for.

12. The PAR shall be done in order of Groups/Divisions/Sectors within the most hazardous areas first, then working outward until all members are accounted for.
13. The Group/Division/Sector Officers shall be called at least twice. If there is no answer, anyone within the immediate area and answering the PAR will be directed to check on the welfare of non-answering Group/Division/Sector.
14. If additional member(s) within a Group/Division/Sector are not accounted for, the Incident Commander shall deploy the secondary RIT to assist with conducting a systematic search in the area of the missing member's last known location.
15. When the missing member(s) within a Group/Division/Sector are located, the Incident Commander shall notify dispatch that the Mayday has been cleared.

B. PASS Device Activation

During any operation involving the use of PASS devices, all personnel in the immediate vicinity on the scene shall acknowledge the activation of a PASS device (lasting for greater than five seconds). This shall be done by immediately proceeding to the location of the alarm and confirming the status of the member(s) via radio with the Incident Commander.

C. Confirmed Report from a Trapped or Lost Member(s)

1. When a member(s) becomes trapped, disoriented, lost, or injured, and needs assistance, he/she/they shall attempt to notify his/her/their Unit Officer, or someone in the immediate area that assistance is needed.
2. If there is no response from anyone in the immediate area, a radio message shall be transmitted to the Group/Division/Sector Officer or Incident Commander.

3. The radio message shall begin with; “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday,” and shall include the following information:

- L Location (i.e., floor/basement/wing)
- U Unit (i.e., Engine 74)
- N Name (i.e., F/F 750)
- A Assignment (i.e., checking for extension)
- R Resources needed (i.e., ceiling fell, need manpower)

- Include pertinent information of physical condition, status of SCBA and other beneficial information

Firefighter: “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. This is Firefighter 750 with Engine 74. I have fallen through the floor into the basement and I can’t find the way out, I am not trapped but I think my leg is broken. I am running low on air.”

4. After completing the radio message, the member’s(s) PASS device shall be activated and remain activated, if possible, to draw attention to the area where assistance is needed.

5. Trapped or lost members shall remain together at all times, attempting to perform any self-rescue techniques they have been taught. They shall remain in the immediate area unless they are able to find and follow a hose line to the exterior of the structure. Any change in their location, status, condition, etc., shall be reported via a radio message.

6. When the Incident Commander receives a Mayday, he/she shall immediately acknowledge it and repeat the LUNAR information.

Command: “Command to Firefighter 750, I copy your Mayday and understand you have fallen into the basement area, and you are running low on air, you are not trapped but your leg may be broken, we have deployed the RIT.”

- a. He/she shall ensure that the Group/Division/Sector Officer and units operating in the same areas as the member(s) are aware of the situation.

Command: “Command to the Basement Sector, did you copy the Mayday from Firefighter 750?”

Basement Sector: “Affirmative, we will attempt to locate and assist Firefighter 750.”

- b. When crews are working in the same immediate area as the trapped or lost member(s), they may make an initial rescue attempt provided that they notify the Incident Commander of their location, their current operational duties, and receive direction to attempt the initial rescue.
 - (1) If they are unable to quickly affect the rescue or locate the missing member(s), they shall be directed to return to their operational assignment upon being relieved by the RIT crew. All Group/Division/Sector Officers shall ensure that any rescue or search for the member(s) is coordinated and at the direction of the Incident Commander.
- c. The Incident Commander shall deploy the RIT to assist with the rescue of the trapped or lost member(s).

Command: “Command to the RIT, report to the basement , did you copy the Mayday from Firefighter 750?”

RIT: “RIT is OK, we are deploying with 4 personnel.”

- 7. All units shall be directed to maintain radio silence on the fireground radio channel unless the radio traffic is related to the trapped or missing member(s) or another emergency condition that develops.
 - a. If it becomes necessary to continue operational radio traffic, an alternate radio channel can be used for that purpose provided that an announcement is made to indicate the channel change.

8. The Incident Commander shall ensure that the units on the fireground continue their operational assignments, unless doing so places the trapped or lost member(s) in imminent danger.
9. When the missing member(s) is located, the Incident Commander shall notify the dispatch that the Mayday has been cleared.

D. Rapid Intervention Team Deployment

1. The Incident Commander may reassign control of the RIT to the Operations Sector if warranted by the scope of the incident.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. All Operational Personnel shall be responsible for:

1. Ensuring that his/her/their Unit or Sector Officer is apprised of his/her/their location and progress.
2. Complying with the procedures established in this Standard Operating guideline.

B. Incident Commanders, Group/Division/Sector Officers and Unit Officers shall be responsible for:

1. Maintaining the whereabouts and well being of his/her crew and any members assigned to his/her functional area.
2. Maintaining an accurate accountability of these members and be prepared to reply to a PAR request without delay.