
 MAYDAY SOG	
-Standard Operating Guideline-	-Number-
	SOG # 0002
	<p>Date Approved by the Fire Chiefs Association: May 25, 2023 Date Last Revised: March 3, 2023 Next Revision Date: May 25, 2024 Review Date: SOG Shall be reviewed annually by the AHJ</p>

I. PURPOSE:

All fire service agencies in the region must adopt the same operational guideline for MAYDAY if one occurs with mutual aid partners working together reducing procedures during a MAYDAY.

The purpose of this guideline is to join with our regional partners in adopting these procedures for the proper activation and handling of a MAYDAY.

II. SCOPE:

A MAYDAY could be called during a structure fire, during training, or any hazardous condition; therefore, this guideline is meant to be all-inclusive of any situation where a MAYDAY is called.

The nature of firefighting places the firefighter at risk of becoming lost, entangled, or trapped. The toxic environment provides only a narrow window of survivability. Increasing the chance of survival is a coordinated effort broken into three functions.

- Calling a MAYDAY
- Incident Command actions
- Rapid Intervention Team

III. DEFINITIONS/ABBREVIATIONS

- Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH): An atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life and would cause irreversible adverse health effects that impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.
- Priority Traffic-When a situation arises, all non-essential radio transmissions should be ceased.
- MAYDAY is only used in the event a firefighter is in distress and needs immediate assistance to be removed from the environment. Examples include when a firefighter or firefighters become trapped, lost, disorientated, or experience equipment malfunctions.
- Incident Commander (IC)
- Incident Action Plan (IAP)
- Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)
- Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)

IV. RESPONSIBILITY:

Safety is everyone on the incident scene's responsibility and must be taken seriously.

All uniformed members must thoroughly understand the steps to take in a MAYDAY situation.

Every firefighter has a responsibility to themselves to call a MAYDAY without fear and regardless of concerns.

It is the responsibility of all officers to ensure compliance with this policy.

It is the responsibility of the I.C. to fully comply with the intent of the guideline.

V. PROCEDURE – FIREFIGHTER CALLING THE MAYDAY

The following are basic guidelines for firefighters to follow if they cannot safely exit an IDLH, atmosphere, or unsafe condition on their own. The same procedure outlined below shall be followed when a crew member can no longer be in an IDLH atmosphere, hazardous situation, or unsafe environment.

The firefighter who believes they need help to get out of the building should immediately announce over the radio "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY" while attempting to rectify the situation.

While the microphone is still keyed open, announce

- W- Who you are (unit)
- W- What happened
- W- Where you are/What do you need

If it can be reached, activate the EMERGENCY ALERT on your radio.

If you are able, activate your PASS device.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR INCIDENT COMMAND

When a Mayday is called, the IC shall:

Acknowledge the Mayday. (The IC is the only person on the channel that will acknowledge a Mayday declaration.) If the IC does not immediately acknowledge the MAYDAY dispatch should ensure the MAYDAY was received.

The IC will immediately obtain the following information

- L-location
- U-unit
- N-name
- A-assignment
- R-resources needed

The firefighter experiencing the MAYDAY will provide any necessary event-specific information required to the IC.

G-R-A-B-L-I-V-E-S

- G- gauge, check air gauge
- R- radio for assistance
- A- activate the PASS alarm
- B- breathing, conserving air
- L- low, stay low to the ground
- I- illuminate, shine a flashlight
- V-volume, make a loud noise
- E- exit, attempt to find an exit
- S- shield airway, protect your airway

The IC will quickly make any necessary unit deployment(s) deploy RIT to start addressing the Mayday.

The IC must resist giving excessive orders after a Mayday declaration.

Quickly make any needed adjustments to the IAP and call for Emergency Traffic only as soon as

possible once a Mayday has been declared.

Contact the dispatch center and declare that there is a MAYDAY situation and hold all non-emergent radio traffic.

After the MAYDAY has been transmitted to the dispatch center, the IC announces on the radio that a MAYDAY has been declared and for all on-scene units to hold all radio traffic unless it's Priority Traffic.

The Safety Officer shall immediately determine the imminent hazard. Make corrective actions and relay to IC the steps being taken. Immediately on the alternative channel perform a PAR.

Dispatch will be advised to upgrade the incident and dispatch the next box alarm card.

Have all units operating on the scene that are directly involved in the rescue effort and the firefighter(s) calling the MAYDAY to stay on the same initial channel assigned to the incident. This shall include but not be limited to Rapid Intervention Team, Safety Officer, and Incident Commander.

All firefighters not directly involved with the MAYDAY shall move all radio traffic to an alternate channel assigned by the I.C. along with the local dispatching agency

The I.C. shall either maintain/oversee the MAYDAY rescue efforts and appoint another Division Chief for the fire suppression activities or immediately appoint someone to handle/oversee the rescue effort and stay in command of the fire suppression efforts. Ideally, the original I.C. stays with the MAYDAY.

A second Safety Officer shall be given to the MAYDAY efforts as soon as possible and will be assigned to continue the original fire suppression.

REINFORCE FIREFIGHTING POSITIONS

Firefighting operations shall not be discontinued during the rescue operation. Incident Commanders shall consider the following:

- Taking aggressive measures to protect the trapped or missing firefighters from the effects of the fire.
- Concentrated efforts to reinforce existing positions.
- Keeping the fire out of the rescue area.
- Providing appropriate ventilation and lighting.

In some situations, it may be appropriate to cease operations in some building areas to relocate companies to protect the rescue effort.

COMPLETION OF MAYDAY

Once a MAYDAY has been controlled and there is adequate response underway, the IC shall contact dispatch and clear MAYDAY radio traffic. All units on the scene will resume normal radio traffic.

Due to the strong physical and emotional toll of a MAYDAY incident, the firefighter who had the MAYDAY, the crew of the RIT, should be advised to go to rehab until rehab advises personnel able to return.

References

- National Fire Protection Association (2020) NFPA 1407: Standard for Training Fire Service Rapid Intervention Crews
 - National Fire Protection Association (2018) NFPA 1500: Standard for Fire Department Occupational Safety & Health Programs
 - National Fire Protection Association (2019) NFPA 1561: Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System and Command Safety
 - National Fire Protection Association (2015): Standard for Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments
 - Brunacini, A. (2002) Fire Command (2nd Edition). Heritage Publishers
 - Brunacini, A. and Brunacini, N. (2004) Command Safety (1st Edition) Across the Street Publications
- International Association of Fire Fighters Fire Ground Survival Manual p. 47-53

Date Approved: May 25, 2023

Date Revised: _____

Secretary Signature: _____