

General Operational Guideline - #3 **Firefighter MAYDAY**

Adopted: June 24th, 2003 Due for Review: January, 2004

Effective: September 1st, 2003

PURPOSE:

- A. This objective of this guideline is to establish language and procedures used in response to a fireground “MAYDAY” situation.

TERMINOLOGY:

- A. MAYDAY – shall be the standard verbal radio transmission used by any firefighter in distress. Any emergency responder should declare a MAYDAY if he/she becomes trapped, disoriented, lost, injured, air emergency, or needs immediate assistance
- B. URGENT – shall be used to identify all other urgent messages for tactical considerations such as a rapid change in fire conditions, potential for a collapse, etc.
- C. PAR – refers to “Personnel Accountability Report” during which Command contacts crew leaders and ensures immediate accounting for their personnel.

PROCEDURES:

I. Declaring a MAYDAY

- A. When an emergency responder identifies that he or a member of his team is lost, trapped, injured, or in need of immediate assistance, he shall (if possible) transmit a verbal message on the fireground channel to Command stating, “**MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY**”. Command in return shall answer immediately, “**Go ahead with your MAYDAY**”
- B. The person transmitting the MAYDAY shall give a brief situational status report if possible:
- LOCATION: floor, side, room, etc.
 - PROBLEM: trapped, lost, air emergency, etc
 - NEEDS: hose line, ladder, air, etc,
 - The Emergency Responder shall activate his/her PASS alarm
- C. The person(s) declaring the MAYDAY shall then attempt by all means to self-rescue.

II. COMMAND RESPONSE to **MAYDAY**:

- A. Immediately deploy Rapid Intervention TEAM (RIT)
- B. After receipt of MAYDAY and immediate situational status, the Commander shall notify Headquarters requesting the MAYDAY TONE

II. COMMAND RESPONSE to **MAYDAY** (cont'd):

- C. After the tone, Headquarters shall announce the MAYDAY situation over the fireground channel and identify an alternate channel for all Non-MAYDAY traffic to switch to. The Incident Commander, the RIT, and the firefighters declaring the MAYDAY shall remain on the frequency that the MAYDAY was declared
- EX: (TONE) Headquarters to all units, we have a MAYDAY in progress, two firefighters lost on side two, third floor, running low on air. All Non-MAYDAY units switch to channel _____.
- D. Upon declaring a MAYDAY the Incident Commander should consider additional resources:
- E. Upon declaring a MAYDAY, the Incident Commander or designee should initiate a PAR for the entire fireground on the alternate channel.
- F. Command should appoint another Chief Officer to over see the rescue operation.
- G. If Headquarters receives a MAYDAY on any other channel that is not the fireground channel, HQ will notify the IC and rescue operations will take place on the frequency that the MAYDAY was declared on.
- H. **It is imperative that all units, upon hearing a MAYDAY, cease all radio transmissions immediately. An alternative channel for fireground operations should be utilized.**