

HIGH RISK/LOW FREQUENCY

HUDSON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures

POLICY NO:
300.17

SUBJECT: MAYDAY/RIT OPERATIONS

Effective Date: 10-14-2010

Revised Date: n/a

APPROVAL: County Fire Officers

PURPOSE

To establish a guideline for firefighters, rescue workers, and Incident Commanders to follow if in the event a firefighter or rescue worker becomes trapped, entangled, lost, disorientated, low air alarm sounding and unable to reach an exit, or in otherwise need of rescue assistance.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. All Chief and Company Officers have the responsibility to comply with and ensure that the personnel under their command are adequately trained, fully understand, and comply with this policy.
2. All firefighters have the responsibility to learn and follow this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Mayday: the term a firefighter, rescue worker, or Incident Commander shall use to alert the Incident Commander or other persons on the emergency scene that personnel are in an imminent life-threatening situation. All other traffic shall use the term emergency.

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

RIT: 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 four personnel, one preferably being a company officer. The RIT shall be primarily available for the rescue of Fire/EMS Department members should the need arise. Depending on the size and complexity of the incident, the Incident Commander shall establish one or more RIT's. The RIT normally replaces or enhances the standby team (two in, two out), which was required during the initial stages of the incident.

Reasons to call a "MAYDAY": (maydays are not limited to this list, these are representative examples)

1. if you become tangled, pinned, or stuck and the low-air alarm activates;
2. if you fall through the roof or floor;
3. if you become tangled, pinned, or stuck and do not extricate yourself in 60 seconds;
4. if you are caught in a flashover;
5. if there is zero visibility and no contact with the hose or lifeline and you do not know in which direction the exit is;
6. if your primary exit is blocked by fire or collapse and you are not at the secondary exit in 30 seconds;
7. if your low-air alarm is activated and you are not at an exit door or window in 30 seconds; and
8. if you cannot find the exit door or window in 60 seconds.
9. if a medical condition occurs.

Procedure

FIREFIGHTER VERBAL REPORT COMMUNICATIONS

When a firefighter/rescue worker is in need of assistance and direct communication **can be** established between the individuals and the Incident Commander, the following dialogue should be used to ensure that communications are consistent and understood:

Firefighter: "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY" To activate a MAYDAY a firefighter or rescue worker should activate their two way radio and loudly speak the words MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY.

Command: "Command to 'Mayday,' (firefighter becomes "Mayday") go ahead." IC acknowledges the Mayday allowing the firefighter to give report and know that they are being heard.

Firefighter: "Mayday to Command, I/We are number of personnel involved and description of emergency:

L - Location, (floor, division, area, wing,)

U - Unit(s) (Hudson Engine 3163)

N - Name(s) (FF Smith, Johnson, Olson, etc.)

A - Assignment (vent group, search group, suppression Group)

R - Resources needed (include current conditions: ceiling fell, low air, lost, hurt, flashover). Provide information that will assist with resource allocation such as right or left hand search pattern.

Command: "Command understands, Mayday is (repeat report)". After the radio message is received and acknowledged, the personnel in Mayday shall activate their pass alarm.

*All personnel not associated with the mayday rescue effort must stay with their assigned division or group or tactical assignment.

FIREFIGHTER INDIRECT COMMUNICATIONS

In the event a two way radio is not present the firefighter or rescue worker should yell out as loud as possible. MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY. Firefighter shall activate pass alarm and make noise to alert others of his/her location.

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

Additional actions to take would include:

Assessing your surroundings and gaining orientation; notify the incident commander using items described earlier in policy; activate PASS alarm; conserve your breathing air with controlled breathing; attempt self rescue; make noise to help rescue groups locate you; if possible move to a wall; use water to keep the area cool.

INCIDENT COMMAND INDIRECT COMMUNICATIONS

When the Incident Commander cannot account for a group, division, or individuals and communication can not be established with said group the Incident Commander shall call for a Mayday. He/she will give a report as to the last known or assigned area that the group, division, or individuals were in and any other pertinent information that is available. The report shall be broadcast on the assigned tactical radio channel, the St. Croix County fire main repeater, and paging channel.

Command must immediately assign someone to monitor all tactical fire ground channels in the event the missing firefighter broadcasts on other channels. The Dispatch Center or the fire station **does not** have the capability to monitor all these channels; it is essential that someone on-scene monitor these channels. The dispatch center shall be notified of the situation.

DISPATCH CENTER - Requested Assistance

The Dispatch Center may be requested to contact all other agencies on our radio system and advise them of the situation. The incident commander shall request dispatch to notify other agencies to be alert in case the firefighter communicates on a different agency's channel. These agencies must be advised to keep the firefighter on whatever channel he-she is currently on and to notify St Croix County dispatch immediately. Instructions and information will be relayed between agencies.

Dispatch may dedicate a Dispatcher to the incident, if this is not the case already.

“MAYDAY” RESPONSE NEEDS

When the Mayday has been called, the following activities need to occur almost simultaneously:

1) The IC will repeat the Report of a Missing Firefighter(s)

All personnel operating at the scene need to be alerted that a **Mayday** situation exists. When a firefighter(s) is declared in need of rescue assistance, the Incident Commander will broadcast on ALL tactical channels being used on the fire ground and the county fire main frequency that a **“Mayday”** exists and that there is personnel in need of rescue. All divisions and groups need to acknowledge the receipt of the message. An announcement of Emergency Traffic will be followed by a situation-status report.

2) Change the Strategic Plan to a High Priority Rescue Effort

Develop a plan for rescue activities: The plan must be continually monitored and revised as necessary. Conditions and updated information cause changes in the plan and objectives. The Incident Commander must communicate any changes to the command staff and division officers:

- a. The Incident Commander may assign an officer (preferably a Chief Officer) as **RIT Group Supervisor**.
- b. Communicate the rescue plan to the rescue group supervisor.
- c. Commit the RIT to the rescue plan for the Mayday. The RIT officer may determine the need for additional or specialized equipment depending on the situation. The RIT shall equip themselves with the following primary tools;.
 - 1. RIT Pack (SCBA bottle with face piece, required connections, 150' of high temp rope)
 - 2. Flashlight
 - 3. Spare radio
 - 4. Wire cutters
 - 5. Charged hose line
 - 6. Axe and halligan bar
 - 7. Thermal imaging camera
 - 8. Portable battery operated jaws when available
- d. Assign another group to backup the RIT position and prepare for the need for additional personnel.
- e. Assign a **Safety Officer** to the **RIT Operation if deemed necessary**.

- f. Have all other groups and divisions not working with Mayday change their radio frequencies to give the Mayday priority on the frequency that the Mayday is transmitting on.
- g. Accountability Officer shall conduct a PAR of all other Operations to ensure that all other members are accounted for.

3) Request Additional Resources

- a. **Additional resources may** be requested by the agency having jurisdiction. There should be no hesitation in requesting additional or specialized resources that may be required.
- b. Include a **Medical Component** when requesting additional resources to insure adequate medical resources are available on-site.

4) Utilize a Centralized Staging Area

All additional resources will be assigned to a centralized staging area(s). Staging manager will oversee resources and ensure that there is access and egress to the scene to transport recovered personnel.

5) Evaluate Incident Action Plan

Support the Division Officer as needed. The division may need assistance with the on-going needs of the incident in the following areas:

- a. Review incident action plan, time sensitive objectives.
- b. Evaluate safety concerns.
- c. Evaluate resources.
- d. Evaluate overall incident progress or shortfalls.
- e. Adjust incident action plan as required.

When time allows...

6) Considerations should be made for:

- a. Support for the crews (Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, Defusing)
- b. Support for the families
- c. Media control