

220 Mayday Procedure/Communications

Identify the actions that should be taken in the event that a firefighter is endangered beyond normal firefighting operations.

Background

- **"Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!"** will only be transmitted when firefighting personnel are in immediately life-threatening situations, or when personnel are found to be missing or lost, usually as a result of a PAR (Personal Accountability Report) request.
- A Mayday report will have priority over all other radio traffic. All other firefighters operating on scene will use their radios for immediately critical information only.
- For large or complex scenes, the Incident Commander should consider moving all personnel that are not directly involved in Mayday operations to the next available Tac channel. Ex: If Mayday is on Tac 1 all personnel that are not directly involved in Mayday operations would move to Tac 2.
- Do not attempt to move Mayday operations to a different channel than the one on which it was initially reported.
- Any personnel operating on the fire ground is empowered to call a Mayday, either for themselves or for others on scene, when they encounter **Mayday Situations** or **Mayday Parameters**.
- **Mayday Operations shall be *cancelled*, by either the firefighter who initiated the call or the Incident Commander, as soon as the firefighter has been rescued, or has managed to self-extricate from the hazardous situation.**

Mayday Situations

Any situation where a firefighter is unable to safely exit the hazard zone, or an event that cannot be resolved by that individual or his crew without outside assistance. Mayday Situations are numerous, and include:

- Personnel cut off from initial exit by fire or collapse
- Leaking or failing SCBA while in IDLH atmosphere
- Inability to account for a firefighter during a PAR
- Activation of a PASS alarm during firefighting operations

Early identification and reporting of a Mayday Situation is critical. The longer it takes to declare a Mayday, the less likely a successful resolution is possible.

**EDDY COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS
POLICY MANUAL PURPOSE**

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Mayday Parameters

Situations that require **IMMEDIATE** transmission of "**Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!**" Mayday parameters can be remembered using the acronym **F.A.C.T.**

- **Fall** - Personnel who fall through flooring or roofing, or have portions of ceiling, roofing, or wall fall on them, shall immediately transmit a Mayday.
- **Air** - When operating in an IDLH atmosphere, activation of a low air alarm necessitates a Mayday transmission.
- **Caught (or entangled)** - Personnel who find themselves or their equipment caught or entangled while operating in an IDLH atmosphere shall immediately transmit a Mayday.
- **Trapped (or lost)** - Personnel who become trapped or disoriented in an IDLH atmosphere shall immediately transmit a Mayday.

Mayday Information

After "**Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!**", the following information needs to be relayed to the Incident commander:

- **Who** - Identify who is calling the Mayday, or for whom the Mayday is being called.
 - When in Mayday operations, personnel will be identified by their **name**, not their department accountability number (i.e. Castillo, not Fire 2)
- **What**- Relay to the Incident Commander:
 - What happened
 - What you need
 - What you are planning on doing
- **Where** - General location within the structure, if known, of personnel who requires rescue or assistance. Include pertinent information on what you can see in the room around you, and whether or not you are still in contact with a hose line.
- **Air** - State PSI remaining in your SCBA bottle, or your closest estimate.

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Procedure:

Roles and Responsibilities of Personnel calling the Mayday

The individual firefighter's response to being in a Mayday Situation or Parameter should be focused on increasing the chances for survival.

1. Stay calm, and speak clearly
2. Transmit "**Mayday, Mayday, Mayday**" over the assigned fire ground channel (most often a Tac Channel)
3. Wait for acknowledgment of the Mayday from the Incident Commander*
4. Once acknowledgement is received, inform the Incident Commander **Who, What, Where, and Air**
5. Activate PASS alarm, and turn on flashlight
6. Continue attempts at self-extrication

***If the Incident Commander does not immediately acknowledge the Mayday transmission, activate PASS alarm, and continue calling "*Mayday, Mayday, Mayday*" until acknowledgement is received.**

Roles and Responsibilities of Incident Commander during Mayday Operations

It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to direct his on-scene resources in the most efficient manner possible, in order to affect a safe and quick rescue. When commanding Mayday operations, the Incident Commander should consider:

- Rapid acknowledgement of a Mayday transmission, and ordering all other radio traffic to cease
- Obtaining **Who, What, Where, and Air**
- Moving radio traffic for fire ground operations not directly related to the Mayday to a different fire ground channel
- Assign second Incident Commander to run fire ground operations
- Activating and deploying a RIT or 2-out Team to begin rescue operations
- Requesting additional resources respond to the scene
- Adjusting current strategy and tactics to assist Mayday operations, while still addressing the initial emergency.

During Mayday operations, the Incident Commander must maintain accountability of all on-scene personnel and ensure that personnel not freelance in an attempt to rescue downed firefighters.

Normal fire ground operations, such as knock down and victim rescue must still be completed. It is not acceptable to create further Mayday situations when attempting to resolve the existing Mayday.