



Division 06

Fire and Rescue Operations

Chapter 04 – Mayday Procedure

October 2011

POLICY

This General Order shall establish a procedure for personnel to utilize to alert Command that an imminent life-threatening situation exists.

DEFINITIONS

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

Mayday Alert Tone - a distinct audible signal broadcast for 5 seconds over operational incident talkgroups by Public Safety Communications (PSC) to notify personnel that a MAYDAY has been declared.

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

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) - a crew (unit) specifically designated by the Incident Commander, in accordance with General Order 06-03, whose sole responsibility is the rescue of members in distress.

PROCEDURES

1. Declaring a MAYDAY

When personnel operating on the scene of an emergency incident find themselves in a life threatening situation and require immediate assistance, they shall instantly declare a MAYDAY.

Declaration of a MAYDAY shall be limited to only those situations which demand immediate action by on scene resources to come to the aid of a distressed member. Examples would include:

- Personnel trapped or entangled
- Personnel lost
- Personnel out of air
- Serious medical emergency

Radio equipped members shall declare a MAYDAY by transmitting a verbal message over the operational incident talkgroup. The message shall begin with “MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY” and immediately followed by:

WHO- is calling the MAYDAY
WHAT – is the problem
WHERE – is the location

The acronym LUNAR can be used to guide members in providing important information:

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

Personnel calling a MAYDAY must make certain that the MAYDAY is acknowledged. If no acknowledgement is received personnel should utilize the Emergency Identifier (EI) function of the portable radio.

Depressing the EI button on the top of the portable radio will transmit an emergency alert over all radio frequencies to alert PSC an



emergency situation exists. Personnel must give a verbal message as listed above and receive an acknowledgement.

When non-radio-equipped members find themselves in a MAYDAY situation they must alert their partner, officer, division/group supervisor or any other member in the vicinity of the situation. The Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) is to be activated to alert members that an emergency situation exists.

2. Public Safety Communications actions/responsibilities

The monitoring of operational incident talkgroups by the PSC dispatcher is an essential component of firefighter safety. Any time that a PSC dispatcher recognizes that an emergency situation exists they are to immediately notify the IC.

In the event that a MAYDAY is transmitted by a unit and not acknowledged by the IC, the PSC dispatcher shall attempt to contact the unit calling and alert the IC that an emergency situation exists.

In the event that an EI has been activated from a fireground unit, PSC shall immediately notify the IC and take action to identify the unit involved.

As soon as a MAYDAY has been declared, PSC shall dispatch a RIC task force in accordance with General Order 06-03 and identify an additional talkgroup for the IC.

PSC shall designate a dispatcher to the sole responsibility of monitoring the channel the MAYDAY was called on. The dispatcher shall assist the IC and ensure pertinent information is acknowledged.

At the conclusion of the MAYDAY event PSC will make an announcement on all radio

channels and return to normal operational mode.

3. Command actions/responsibilities

Upon receipt of a MAYDAY the Incident Commander (IC) shall immediately acknowledge the unit/person calling and ascertain the following information:

- WHO- is calling the MAYDAY
- WHAT – is the problem
- WHERE – is the location

The IC will shall repeat the information back to ensure confirmation and accuracy. After acknowledging the MAYDAY Command will request that the MAYDAY alert tone be transmitted by PSC. PSC shall transmit the alert tone over the operational incident talkgroup, talkgroup 1, and talkgroup 2.

At the conclusion of the MAYDAY alert tone, the IC will announce that a MAYDAY has been declared for:

- WHO- is calling the MAYDAY
- WHAT – is the problem
- WHERE – is the location

IC shall deploy the RIC based upon an established action plan (WHO; WHAT; WHERE) and in accordance with General-Order 06-03. Appropriate deployment is generally considered to be:

- Reported location
- Last known Location
- Most hazardous area first

If units on the incident were operating on any of the alternate talkgroups, within the specific incident group (i.e. talkgroup 4 or 5), the IC must make the MAYDAY announcement on the appropriate announcement talkgroup (i.e. talkgroup 6).



IC is to request additional resources as appropriate.

- A RIC Task-Force is to be dispatched in accordance with General-Order 03-11.
- Ensure appropriate level of EMS resources are available for potential number of victims.
- Ensure sufficient resources to maintain suppression efforts.

IC must control the fireground communications.

- Non-essential radio traffic is to cease
- Members in distress should not be expected to switch radio channels.
- Assign officer to monitor the talkgroup the MAYDAY was called on.
- Operational units are to be assigned an alternate talkgroup by PSC.
- Face-to-face communications should be utilized with-in groups and divisions

Expand the Incident Management System (IMS).

- As a minimum, the functional areas of suppression and RIC (rescue) **must** be separated.
- Additional Branches, Divisions and Groups shall be established based upon the needs and the anticipated needs of the incident. Consideration should be given to the following:
 - EMS
 - Staging
 - PIO
 - CISD
 - Family/Survivors Support

The IC shall complete a PAR as soon as possible. The PAR should not be done over the talkgroup at a time that would be a detriment to the MAYDAY event. PAR's at the division/group level should be conducted

immediately and through face-to-face communication.

Upon confirmation that the MAYDAY issue has been resolved, and after a complete PAR has been conducted, the IC will clear the MAYDAY and return units to a normal operating mode.

After the MAYDAY event has been cleared the IC will reassesses the incidents priorities and make any needed adjustments to the incident action plan. The adjustments to the incident action plan and the current operational mode shall be communicated to all branches, divisions and groups.

4. Division/Group/Unit Supervisor actions/responsibilities

Officers operating on the scene of any emergency must ensure close accountability of personnel and/or units (resources) under their command. Officer must be prepared to give an accurate accountability report at any time.

When a MAYDAY has been declared all officers must adhere to operational discipline and keep assigned personnel and/or units under control. Personnel and/or units must not freelance into the rescue effort.

- Officers must be aware, and listen for a change in talkgroup assignments and switch to the correct talkgroup.

Division/Group/Unit supervisors shall ensure that any rescue or search for distressed member(s) is a coordinated effort at the authorization of the IC.

Only crews in direct physical contact with distressed member(s) may engage in any rescue effort.



Division/Group/Unit supervisors shall immediately account for all assigned members. This should be accomplished by face-to-face contact leaving the radio frequency clear for emergency traffic.

- If personnel and/or units are unaccounted for the IC must be notified immediately.
- If personnel and/or units have been accounted for the officer will give the report when called for.

Division/Group/Unit supervisors shall ensure that operational assignments are carried out and suppression efforts are maintained.

5. All Operating Personnel actions/responsibilities

Every member working on the scene of an emergency incident must ensure that accountability is maintained at the unit level. Personnel must keep their direct supervisor apprised of their current location and progress.

- Each member is responsible to work in pairs/groups.
- Every group and/or pair must be radio equipped.
- Every effort must be made to not become separated.

When a MAYDAY has been declared, every member must adhere to operational discipline not freelance into the rescue effort.

- Members must be aware, and listen for a change in the talkgroup assignment and switch to the correct talkgroup.

When a MAYDAY has been declared each member shall immediately report to their assigned officer for accountability. This should be accomplished by face-to-face

contact when-ever possible, leaving the radio frequency clear for emergency traffic.

If the member's officer is unaccounted for, the IC must be notified immediately.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

N/A