

COMMUNICATING A MAYDAY

Purpose:

To establish communications in the event of an on-scene emergency that involves fire personnel, regardless of the cause or person in need of assistance or rescue.

Definition:

Imminent Life Hazard: A situation where a human could suffer impairment, injury, or death if he/she is not removed from the IDLH environment as soon as possible.

Operations:

- A. The word “MAYDAY, MAYDAY” shall be designated as an emergency audible signal to identify a situation in which a member needs assistance or is in distress. This signal may be used when personnel become trapped, in imminent life hazard, become lost/disoriented, in need of immediate assistance, or by the Incident Commander because a member is missing.
- B. The MAYDAY includes but is not limited to incidents involving structure fires, hazardous materials, technical rescue, extrication and other related events. Any member at the incident scene can initiate a MAYDAY.
- C. Once a MAYDAY has been announced, all radio traffic shall cease until the Incident Commander has made contact with the member who initiated the MAYDAY. Only those transmissions that are directly related to the MAYDAY shall take place. The Incident Commander shall designate someone to broadcast on all channels of the MAYDAY.
- D. The channel that has been secured shall be designated as the MAYDAY channel. An alternate fireground channel shall be established by the Incident Commander and all fireground radio traffic shall switch to that channel.
- E. The Incident Commander shall contact the member who initiated the MAYDAY and verify: the emergency, number of personnel involved, location of the member, and secure a designated channel on the radio for direct communications with the Incident Commander and the person reporting the MAYDAY. If the Incident Commander is unable to make contact with the member needing assistance, then the channel in which the MAYDAY was announced shall be secured as the MAYDAY channel.
- F. All members on the fireground shall continue their assignment and remain at that location unless otherwise directed by the Incident Commander when a MAYDAY has been reported. A MAYDAY is not for building evacuation.

- G. The Incident Commander shall report on all channels and inform PSCC which channel is the MAYDAY channel. The Incident Commander may assign operations, sectors or other personnel to monitor and coordinate functions on other channels once a MAYDAY has been announced. This may vary with the size and complexity of the incident.
- H. The fireground operations channel shall not interfere with the MAYDAY channel. Only those members dealing with the MAYDAY operation shall be on the MAYDAY channel.
- I. Once a MAYDAY has been reported the Incident Commander shall request an additional alarm assignment, request a paramedic unit be sent, deploy the rapid intervention team to assist with the operation and verify with the Accountability Officer of the names and numbers of members involved.
- J. All radio traffic and channel shall return to normal operations after the termination of the member rescue. The Incident Commander shall inform all personnel of the change in operations and radio channels.