

Miami Valley Fire / EMS Alliance



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| SAFETY May Day | EFFECTIVE DATE: _____ SUPERSEDES: _____ PAGE 1 OF 4 |
| Approved by: _____ Fire Chief, _____ Fire Department | |

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This Directive will establish a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for declaring emergency radio traffic by announcing **“URGENT”**, **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”**, or **“MAYDAY”** communications. Actions by the Incident Commander (IC) must be quick, decisive and correct. The situation allows only a very narrow window of survivability for any missing firefighter(s).

2.0 DIVISIONS AFFECTED

- 2.1 All Fire Department Personnel
- 2.2 All Telecommunications Personnel

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 All Fire Department Officers are responsible to comply with and ensure that Personnel under their command are adequately trained, fully understand and comply with the SOP.
- 3.2 All Fire Department Personnel have the responsibility to learn and follow the SOP.

4.0 RADIO MESSAGES

- 4.1 The following terms will be used:
 - A. **“URGENT”** – To indicate priority traffic to transmit information not related to immediate danger to life. A change in conditions, the immediate need for a tool or a change of tactics would warrant **“URGENT”**. This could also indicate a risk to personnel if not quickly resolved.
 - B. **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”** – To indicate an immediately dangerous

emergency condition that may significantly affect the emergency scene personnel, such as the evidence of imminent collapse, fire condition change (flashover), or another sudden event such as the failure of a major electrical line would warrant **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC.”** All listening crews will affect radio silence upon hearing the transmission of **“EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”**.

- C. **“MAYDAY”** - will be used by firefighters to report their status as being in trouble and needing rescue. Any member may use “MAYDAY” to report a lost firefighter. Any report of “MAYDAY” will receive priority radio traffic.

5.0 MAYDAY PROCEDURES

- 5.1 To ensure firefighters will call for help as soon as they recognize they may be in trouble these **“MAYDAY”** decision-making parameters are established. In short, if a firefighter THINKS he or she is having a problem, THEY ARE!
- 5.2 If any firefighter encounters the following, or any firefighter witnesses the following, a **“MAYDAY”** shall be declared over any available radio:
 - A. Becomes tangled, pinned, or stuck, unable to free one after 2 attempts or has a low air alarm activated
 - B. Falls through a roof or floor
 - C. Caught in a flashover or threat of being burned
 - D. Disoriented and no contact with the hose or search-line and no knowledge in which direction the exit is located
 - E. Primary exit is blocked by fire or collapse and cannot be at the secondary exit in 30 seconds
 - F. SCBA malfunction affecting breathing or low air alarm activates and egress is delayed or impeded
 - G. Anytime disoriented and not able to immediately locate a means of egress
 - H. Anytime a firefighter suffers a medical emergency that would impede his/her immediate egress from the structure or Immediate Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) environment, or requires the assistance of another firefighter or firefighters to affect his/her egress
- 5.3 **THESE CRITERIA ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES THAT SIGNIFY A MAYDAY EVENT. AT ANY TIME WHEN A FIREFIGHTER FEELS HIS OR HER LIFE IS AT SIGNIFICANT RISK HE/SHE SHALL CALL A “MAYDAY”.**
- 5.4 In the event that a member cannot be located through a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR), or any time a firefighter is reported missing, any member on the emergency scene may announce a **“MAYDAY”**. The term **“MAYDAY”** will indicate a lost or down firefighter. Incident Command

shall respond to a "**MAYDAY**" by implementing a rescue plan for the firefighter(s).

5.5 The firefighter calling the "**MAYDAY**" shall follow the following procedures:

- A. Shall announce "**MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY**" over any available radio
- B. Shall utilize the acronym: **L.U.N.A.R.S.**
 - 1. **L**OCATION
 - 2. **U**NIT DESIGNATION (Engine 1, Ladder 2, etc.)
 - 3. **N**AME(S) OR UNIT #'S OF PERSONS IN TROUBLE
 - 4. **A**SSIGNMENT – What was the person/crew assignment?
 - 5. **R**ESOURCES - Identify what resources might be needed
 - 6. **S**ITUATION – Low air, trapped, pinned, lost, etc.

(The acronym is strictly a reminder. As long as all information is transmitted, the order is not important.)

- C. Will manually activate Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) alarm and Radio Emergency Button
- D. Lay low for increase visibility floor to locate potential exits or landmarks
- E. Attempt to find exit or cover
- F. Find door, window and/or breach wall
- G. Attempt to extricate with hand tools
- H. Attempt to disentangle
 - 1. Cut wire
 - 2. SCBA low profile maneuvers
 - 3. Use tool to make noise
 - 4. Turn on all flashlights

5.6 EXAMPLE:

- A. "**MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY**" "This is Firefighter Smith; Engine 2; I am on the third floor, "C" side, assigned to check for fire extension, and the roof has collapsed. I have air, but am pinned by the structure. I am radio and PASS equipped. I am activating my PASS."

5.7 CANCELLING A MAYDAY

- A. In the event that a **"MAYDAY"** situation is quickly resolved by finding a door or window, disentangling, or being found by another crewmember, it is imperative that the **"MAYDAY"** be cancelled if no emergency exists, to prevent or cancel Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) deployment.

5.8 PROCEDURE FOR CANCELLING MAYDAY

- A. If possible and practical, the person calling the **"MAYDAY"** should cancel the **"MAYDAY"**.
- B. Call the Incident Commander, or the Sector Commander responsible for the RIT response.
 - 1. Give name, company and location
 - 2. Tell Command that **"MAYDAY IS CANCELLED, MAYDAY IS CANCELLED, MAYDAY IS CANCELLED"** and await confirmation.

5.9 EMERGENCY TRAFFIC TONES

- A. The I.C., Safety Officer, or other designated member can request (at his or her discretion) emergency tones (*Manual Alert Tone Button on Console*) be transmitted by Fire Department Communication Center on the Current Channel to establish radio control and enact radio silence so that an emergency message can be transmitted. Caution should be taken to prohibit the use of Emergency Tones when they may cover the traffic of those declaring an emergency.
- B. All personnel operating at the scene need to be alerted that a critical situation exists where a firefighter(s) is/are lost, trapped or missing. This could allow any interior firefighter or crew to realize that they are in close proximity with the **"MAYDAY"** crew and allow them to immediately assist.

5.10 EMERGENCY RADIO TRAFFIC

- A. If a **MAYDAY** is sounded, steps will be taken by the IC to have all personnel operating at the scene, EXCEPT THE MAYDAY PERSON(S) INVOLVED, THE RIT COMMAND OFFICER, AND THE RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM(S) change radio channels to a newly designated operations channel.