



## Standard Operating Guideline Emergency Procedures



### PURPOSE

This document is intended to establish basic Emergency Procedures for emergency incident operations. They are designed to be applied generally. They may be modified as situations dictate.

### SCOPE

Nothing in this standard prevents the immediate deployment of personnel to affect a rescue during any stage of an incident.

### PROCEDURES

#### **Command Function for Emergency Procedures**

During an incident where an emergency is called over the radio, it is the expectation that the incident will be carried out in a systematic and predictable fashion. This event needs to be conducted with rapid decision making and precision due to the severity of the possible outcome of such event.

The terminology used to announce these emergencies shall be "Emergency Traffic" or "MAYDAY." Mayday shall be used for any situation involving a firefighter emergency. Emergency Traffic shall be used for all other situations.

#### **Emergency Traffic**

The term "Emergency Traffic" is designated to announce any problem incident commander needs to be aware of. These are safety situations and should be identified and understood globally.

The incident commander activities immediately following the emergency traffic should consist of the following:

Command should first:

- Acknowledge the Emergency Traffic.
- Repeat the safety hazard.
- Then announce any operational changes.

**\*\*\* Expectations on the fire ground are for personnel to hold non-essential radio traffic \*\*\***



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### MAYDAY

The term “MAYDAY” has been designated as the radio broadcast for alerting all personnel operating on an incident of a firefighter in distress. Criteria for initiating a “MAYDAY” may include, but is not limited to personnel on an incident: trapped, disoriented or lost within the structure, believed to be missing within the structure, or a firefighter medical emergency.

Incident commanders actions immediately following a “MAYDAY” call should consist of the following:

Command should first:

- Acknowledge the “MAYDAY” and gather NUCAN
- Initiate rescue operations
- Announce the emergency procedure to all personnel on the fire-ground

1) Information that needs to be immediately obtained:

Name  
Unit & Location  
Conditions  
Actions  
Needs

2) Once NUCAN information has been obtained and the announcement made on all operating incident channels, the Incident Commander should advise Fire Dispatch that a “MAYDAY” has been declared and request an additional alarm(s), tactical channel(s) as needed.

Any available Chief Officer should assist with the incident management. This assistance from another Chief Officer allows Command to stay on the radio channel with the rescue operations (i.e. calling for additional resources, and coordinating of communications).

3) Announce what has happened on the fire ground and give specific directions of what is expected including radio discipline.

**Rapid movement of incident operations to another tactical channel may complicate operations.**

**\*\*\* Expectations on the incident are for personnel to hold all radio traffic, unless they have specific information necessary for the rescue of the firefighter \*\*\***

Once the command officer has more information about the anticipated timeline of the rescue procedure, the decision can be made to either move all incident operations to another tactical channel or continue radio operations with **strict** radio discipline.

The movement of incident operations to another tactical channel should only be done when indications of the rescue operation are going to be **extensive**.



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For extensive rescue operations, movement of incident operations should be voiced on the original TAC channel prior to moving any companies. A PAR shall be conducted on the new TAC channel.

#### **Actions that MUST occur**

- Acknowledge "MAYDAY" and collect NUCAN.
- Launch RIC (or fire personnel on-scene to attempt rescue).
- Announce the status of the fire ground, launching RIC, location, etc.
- Update Dispatch that a "MAYDAY" has occurred on the fire ground.
- Request an additional alarm and additional TAC channels.
- Allow the RIC team the time to function and gather information to pass on to command.

#### **Decision points**

- Keep operations on the same channel with radio discipline or move all operations to additional channel.
- If moving all incident ground companies off of the TAC channel to newly assigned TAC channel ensure that a PAR is conducted by all companies on scene on the newly assigned TAC channel. This should be done by the Chief Officer running the incident operations. A roll call PAR (3 companies at a time) may streamline this process.
- Call additional resources to support the rescue effort.
- Monitor progress of the rescue effort.
- Re-engage incident operations.

Command should consider maintaining a full additional alarm in staging, until the completion of rescue operation due to the anticipated stress and work load affiliated with an operating MAYDAY.

As soon as a company has made contact with the down firefighter(s), they should complete a PAC assessment and communicate a CAN report to Command or RIC Group Supervisor.



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### PAC Assessment:

- P- Person – Is this the person you're looking for?  
PASS device – Silence it  
Portable Radio – Turn the down firefighter's portable radio off to reduce radio interference.
- A- Air – Check the down firefighter's air supply  
Assessment – Checking for entrapment or entanglement  
Actions – What you are doing with the down firefighter
  - (1) Air options
  - (2) Packaging type
  - (3) Location of exit points
- C- Communicate a CAN report based on the information gathered from the PAC assessment

### CAN Report:

- C- Conditions – What you've got
- A- Actions – What you're doing
- N- Needs – What resources you need (crews and equipment)

Once the down firefighter(s) have been removed from the IDLH atmosphere, Command shall transmit an **"an all clear on the RIC, resume radio traffic"** on all assigned radio channels.

### **Imminent Hazard / Operational Retreat**

- 1) In the event of potential building collapse, extraordinary hazard, or a change in conditions that creates an imminent danger to personnel, members shall communicate this information by using "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" on the radio to identify the situation, to Command. Command is responsible for making orderly and thorough contact with all on-scene personnel by requesting "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" on the radio. Using clear text to identify the conditions, Command should announce "ALL COMPANIES EVACUATE THE BUILDING" or, "CHANGE FROM AN OFFENSIVE TO A DEFENSIVE ATTACK", or any other critical scene information.
- 2) Company Officers will account for their crew members. Command should then confirm a PAR for the entire incident.
- 3) At the conclusion of the "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" situation, Command should then transmit "ALL CLEAR, RESUME RADIO TRAFFIC" on all assigned radio channels to end the emergency situation.



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### Evacuation

- 1) If an immediate evacuation is needed, Command should initiate evacuation procedures, announce "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" on the radio, and proceed to broadcast critical scene information in "CLEAR-TEXT" to emergency personnel operating in an area requiring the evacuation (i.e. "ALL COMPANIES EVACUATE THE BUILDING", etc.)
- 2) The "EVACUATION SIGNAL" will consist of **repeated short blasts** of the air horn for a period no longer than 10 seconds, followed by 10 seconds of silence. This sequence of air horn blasts for 10 seconds followed by a 10 second period of silence will be done three times; the total air horn evacuation signal including periods of silence will last 50 seconds.
- 3) Command shall designate the specific apparatus to sound the evacuation signal using air horns. This can be done in conjunction with the radio announcement of "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC", with direction for emergency scene personnel to evacuate the hazard area.

**NOTE: The apparatus selected to conduct the air horn "EVACUATION SIGNAL" should not be an apparatus in close proximity to the Command Post, thus reducing the chance of missing any radio messages.**

- 4) Company Officers will account for their crew members. Command should then confirm a PAR for the entire incident.
- 5) At the conclusion of the evacuation situation, Command should then transmit "ALL CLEAR, RESUME RADIO TRAFFIC" on all assigned radio channels to end the emergency situation.



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### Emergency Procedures with Incident Command Example

#### PURPOSE

This training document is intended to establish basic expectations of Commands actions and the actions of the field operators. They are designed to be applied generally. They may be modified as situations dictate.

#### SCOPE

Emergency procedures need to be recognized as very labor intensive, stressful, and dynamic situations. Nothing in this training standard prevents the immediate deployment of personnel to affect a rescue during any stage of an incident.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

*When units are assigned a task, they are referred to by their unit identifier.*

#### PROCEDURES

##### Emergency Traffic

*Sample radio traffic*

- TR106 -**        ***“Command, TR106, emergency traffic”***
- Command -**    ***“Go ahead with your emergency traffic”***
- TR106 -**        ***“There has been a partial collapse of the Charlie side wall”***
- Command -**    ***“Command copies the collapse of the Charlie side wall.***
- Command -**    ***All companies evacuate the building, we are changing to a defensive mode, stand-by for a PAR.”***



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### “MAYDAY”

Sample radio traffic

- Firefighter -** **“MAYDAY”, “MAYDAY”, “MAYDAY”**
- Command -** **“Command copies the “MAYDAY”, go with your traffic.”**
- Firefighter -** **“This is Firefighter Jackson, from E10. I am disoriented in the Delta side of the building and running out of air. I need help.”**
- Command -** **“Command copies Firefighter Jackson from E10, disoriented in the Delta side. Activate your PASS device, stay calm, help is on the way.”**
- Command -** **“Command to TR10, can you locate Firefighter Jackson from E10. He is in the Delta side of the building and running low on air.”**
- TR10 -** **“TR10 copies moving to the Delta side.”**
- Command -** **“Emergency traffic, this is Command; we have a “MAYDAY” on the fire ground from Firefighter Jackson, E10. TR10 is assisting with the rescue. Hold all radio traffic.”**
- B/C 2 -** **“Command this is Battalion 2, I will notify Fire Dispatch of the “MAYDAY,” and handle dispatch traffic.**
- Command -** **“Command copies.”**
- B/C 2 -** **“Fire Dispatch, Battalion 2, we have a “MAYDAY” on this incident, give me a second alarm. Staging at Jst and 16<sup>th</sup>, I also need 3 additional TAC channels.**

**Consider discussion points and continue.**

Most mayday events have occurred on the fire-ground within 7-10 minutes of the first arriving unit. Most incidents within the region will not have a complete command organization in place including RIC, RIC Group Supervisor, or Divisions.

When the “MAYDAY” event takes place within the first 7-10 minutes and there is only one B/C on-scene in the role of command, command should run the rescue procedure.

When the “MAYDAY” event takes place with at least two B/C’s on-scene. It is the discretion of command, who should run the rescue operation. Considerations should include who has had contact with the downed firefighter and acknowledged the “MAYDAY.”



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**Signature Page**

The Undersigned Fire Chiefs approve of the content in this document.

August 30, 2012

A blue ink signature of Tracey Hansen, written in a cursive style.

Tracey Hansen, Fire Chief  
Cosumnes Fire Department

A blue ink signature of Ron Phillips, written in a cursive style.

Ron Phillips, Fire Chief  
City of Folsom Fire Department

A blue ink signature of Ray Jones, written in a cursive style.

Ray Jones, Fire Chief  
Sacramento Fire Department

A blue ink signature of Kurt Henke, written in a cursive style.

Kurt Henke, Fire Chief  
Sacramento Metro Fire District