

	<h1>COMMERCE FIRE DEPARTMENT</h1> <h2>Standard Operating Guidelines</h2>
	Subject: Calling a “Mayday”
	Reference Number: 3.06
	Effective Date: 12/5/13 Last Date Revised: 7/9/2015
Approved By: Chief Kevin Dean	

Purpose: To provide common terminology and guidelines for CFD personnel should they become distressed during firefighting operations. Each member should know, understand, and operate according to this guideline as each situation arises. This guideline is to help provide for communicating and responding to a firefighter(s) down, lost, trapped, disoriented, incapacitated, out of air or otherwise in need of emergency assistance. It should also be used by a firefighter who knows this has or is occurring to another firefighter.

Scope: These guidelines apply to all Commerce Fire Department personnel.

General:

There will be times in every firefighter’s career where the unexpected can and will occur. This could be the result of a firefighter being separated from his/her team, a team losing their bearings inside a structure, equipment failure, or any other unexpected event that will require the assistance of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).

As soon as a firefighter recognizes the possibility for the need of assistance, he/she should call for it! Waiting is not an option, and many lives have been lost for that reason. You should call for help as soon as possible. You can cancel the assistance if the situation is mitigated before help arrives.

Responsibilities:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief of the department to implement proper training to its members in the application of this guideline.
2. It shall be the responsibility of each member to know, understand, and use this guideline as it applies to the situation at hand. Each member will use good judgment in the use of this guideline.
3. All members shall use proper terminology identified in this SOG when functioning in the Incident Command System (ICS).
4. All members entering the Hazard Zone must have a portable radio and personal rescue tool (such as an axe, halligan tool, etc.). If it is not possible for each

member to have a radio, the crew leader of each group should at least have radio. No crew shall enter without radio communications with command.

5. Minimum crew size is two, and crewmembers must remain intact.
6. Crews must have an assignment and must be working under the direct supervision of a Sector Officer or Command.
7. Crews will follow Air Management guidelines.

TERMINOLOGY:

Mayday – Used to silence radio traffic to report a lost, missing or trapped firefighter(s). This transmission shall only be used in the following situations or conditions:

- By a member or company that is lost, trapped, injured or otherwise in distress.
- By a Group Leader, Sector Officer, Safety Officer, or Command staff that cannot account for an assigned firefighter operating in the hazard area. This would generally occur following a PAR that fails to locate and account for the firefighter(s).
- By a firefighter who witnesses, or has confirmed that a firefighter is lost, trapped, or injured.
- It is not be used for finding a lost or trapped civilian.

Emergency Radio Traffic – A verbal radio announcement reserved exclusively for use by members on scene to provide either:

1. Immediate notification for all incident scene personnel of a notable hazard that either is about to occur or has occurred.
2. Notification to all personnel that an emergency exists and they should prepare to listen for directions or actions that follow.

P.A.R. – (Personnel Accountability Report) – a term used to track and to report the location, status, and welfare of personnel assigned to a given crew.

R.I.T. – (Rapid Intervention Team) – a team specifically designated by the Incident Commander at the scene of an emergency beyond the initial stages, consisting of a minimum of two personnel. The RIT shall be primarily available for the rescue of fire department members should the need arise.

P.S.I. – Pounds per square inch (US unit for measuring pressure)

P.A.S.S. – Personal Alert Safety System

U.C.A.N. – Unit Conditions Actions Needs

The rule of air management – Know how much air you have in your S.C.B.A. and manage that air so that you leave the hazard area before your low-air warning activates.

GUIDELINES:

A firefighter in a “Mayday” emergency should follow the standardized actions of a lost / trapped firefighter. This will be the same actions used to predict the location and guide the search for that firefighter. By following a standardized set of actions, the firefighter’s chances of being located will greatly increase and the time required to be located will decrease.

1. STAY CALM AND CONSERVE AIR

A conscious effort must be made by the lost firefighter to control breathing. Unnecessary talking or physical activity must be ceased, unless absolutely needed. Firefighters must control and pace their physical exertion activities in order to extend their SCBA air supply.

2. STAY WITH YOUR PARTNER OR CREW

Members that separate from each other make it difficult for rescuers to find all firefighters. Crewmembers that stays intact as a crew enhances their chances for ALL being rescued and allows easier, more efficient extrication.

3. INITIATE A “MAYDAY”

Firefighters who find themselves lost or trapped must immediately declare “MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY” over the radio to announce their situation while they attempt to solve/mitigate their problem. Firefighters should not delay notification of distress. Notifications should occur as soon as the firefighter THINKS he or she is in trouble. The longer you wait to tell somebody you are in trouble the more you jeopardize yourself and the rescuers lives. This notification should be done verbally using a portable radio.

(a) The radio message “MAYDAY” should be used by a lost or trapped firefighter to report their status as being in trouble and needing rescue. Any report of “MAYDAY” shall receive priority radio traffic. The term “Mayday” will be reserved ONLY to report lost, trapped, or otherwise distressed firefighters. The term “emergency radio traffic” should be used to report other emergencies.

(b) When calling the Mayday, firefighters should give Command information to assist in their rescue. This can be summed up using the U.C.A.N. method. (See below)

1. U – UNIT (You – your name)
2. C – CONDITIONS (injuries, air supply, location)
3. A – ACTIONS (what you were doing when problem happened)
4. N - NEEDS (what you need to fix problem)

The report may also include a description of building structures surrounding them, sounds of nearby activities, (i.e., ventilation saw noise), or any other information that might direct Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) to their location.

4. ACTIVATE PASS DEVICE

As soon as a firefighter recognizes he/she is lost or trapped, the PASS device must be manually activated to sound the audible tone. The device must remain on until rescued. If the device interferes with the lost firefighters communication critical radio messages to incident commander or rescuers, the device may be turned off temporarily. Once messages are completed, the device must again be manually activated.

5. MONITOR RADIO / UPDATE COMMAND

If a firefighter cannot contact Command or any other units on the assigned radio channel (which should be Tac 2), the firefighter should go to another channel to attempt contact and declare an emergency. The "dispatch" channel (channel 1) is preferred. It is important to find any channel that works. Once communication is established, remain on that channel and messages will be relayed to Command.

- TURN OFF PASS TO TALK
- REACTIVATE PASS

6. USE FLASHLIGHT TO SIGNAL

If assuming a position to await rescuers, the firefighters should attempt to position his/her flashlight toward the ceiling. This will enhance the rescuer's ability to see the light and locate the downed firefighter.

7. USE TOOLS OR DEBRIS TO ALERT RESCUERS

If able, the firefighter should attempt tapping noises to assist rescuers in locating him/her using a tool or any item found that could make a noise (i. e., hitting a tool or piece of wood against a metal roll-up door)

8. ATTEMPT TO LOCATE AN EXIT / SEEK AREA OF REFUGE

- Move towards visible light
- Listen for audible sounds
- Search wall for windows, doors, etc.
- Search for hoselines (Read Couplings)
- Attempt to locate a lifeline

(a) A lost firefighter should always attempt to get out of the building by whatever means possible. Where doors, windows, or other egress is not available, firefighters should next attempt to reach an exterior wall. Once at the wall he/she will be able to search for doorways, windows, and hallways that generally lead to the outside. Rescuers will first search hallways, around walls, and around windows and doors, before sweeping large interior areas. For this reason, firefighters must avoid collapsing in the middle of open spaces. Getting to hallways, doors, or windows will

increase the chances of being rescued early. Breaching walls for escape or fresh air can aid in survivability. These actions also provide predictable activities that will aid rescuers.

(b) If the firefighter cannot a way out, but there is a safe refuge in a protective room or floor away from the fire, the firefighter should take advantage of this location to retreat.

9. GO DOWN STEPS UNLESS IN A BASEMENT OR SUB-FLOOR

Go down stairs unless in a basement or sub floor area. Command should be advised of the location by whatever means possible.

10. ASSUME DEFENSIVE POSTURE

If a firefighter cannot get out, he should assume a horizontal position on the floor that maximizes the audible effects of the PASS device. The firefighter should attempt to take the position at an exterior wall, doorway or hallway that maximizes quick discovery by rescue crews.

- Right lateral side
- Protect face piece with gloves

The following would be a typical call for "MAYDAY"

Firefighter: "Mayday Mayday Mayday"

Command: "All units hold all radio traffic. We have a Mayday. Go ahead with Mayday."

Firefighter: "This firefighter Jones with CFD. I have fallen through the floor into The basement and I cannot find the way out. I am not trapped but I think my leg is broken. I am running low on air."

Command: "Command to firefighter Jones I copy your Mayday and understand you have fallen into the basement area, and you are running low on air, you are not trapped but your leg may be broken, we are deploying the RIT"

Command: "Command to the RIT, report to the basement, did you copy the Mayday from firefighter Jones?"

RIT: RIT clear on traffic. Entering basement at "C" Charlie side.

Command: "Command to all personnel clear this frequency for Mayday operations only. Take all other radio traffic to Tac 2. (or Tac 3 or 4).

Command: "Command to Jackson Center"

Dispatch: "Go ahead command"

Command: "We have a Mayday situation at this location. All Mayday radio traffic will be on Tac 1 (or channel that was used to call mayday). Fire ground operations will be switching to Tac 2." (or other available channel).

Command Considerations:

COMPANY OR SECTOR OFFICERS

Company officers or sector officers who are unable to locate a crew or firefighters assigned to them, must immediately notify command and use "MAYDAY" to notify all personnel operation on the fire ground. When possible the company or sector officer should include who are missing, last known location, and actions being taken. Firefighting positions must not be abandoned during the rescue effort; the Company and Sector officers MUST control free-lancing. No personnel shall attempt a rescue without direct orders from the IC.

- Move all fire ground communications to a separate radio channel to assure the mayday firefighter(s) has a clear line of communications to Command and the Rapid Intervention Team (R.I.T.).
- Transfer information to R.I.T. Assign member (preferably an officer) to lead the R.I.T. This person shall command the R.I.T. operation.
- Deploy R.I.T.
- Establish additional R.I.T. for crews now assigned for rescue.
- Call for a Personnel Accountability Report (P.A.R.) from all on scene crews.
- Assure a Safety Officer is been assigned to the incident.
- Request additional resources. (additional fire units, additional med units).
- Open / unlock all doors.
- Ventilate.
- Provide additional lighting.
- Maintain strong command and control of all crews.
- Once the Mayday has been cleared, the Incident Commander will call "All Clear" over the radio and return all radio traffic back to previous fire ground frequency.