



Buxton Fire-Rescue

Standard Operating Guideline

Subject: Structural Fire (3)

Section: Mayday Procedures (4)

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Purpose:

To establish a guideline for the use of a Mayday radio transmission by firefighter(s), and the coordinated rescue effort to support a successful rescue of lost, trapped, or disoriented firefighter(s).

Statement of Importance:

In no way is this SOG a limiting document for the operation of, or in response to a Mayday situation on the fireground. Mayday situations are the worst to manage, and should be done within the guidelines of our ongoing training and education surrounding sound firefighting and rescue techniques, in order to rescue a lost or trapped firefighter. These situations are extreme risk and high benefit, and require extensive resources and manpower. Incident Commanders should constantly evaluate available resources and the size of the RIT Group, in case of situations where they are pressed into duty.

Guideline:

The use of the radio transmission Mayday shall be used only when a firefighter, or crew of firefighters, is lost, disoriented, trapped or experiencing other serious life threatening event(s) while operating within an IDLH atmosphere, within a building, and is in need of immediate rescue assistance.

Initiating a Mayday

If a firefighter or crew of firefighters is in a situation as defined above, the following procedure should be immediately used:

1. Use your radio to call, "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday."
2. Give a LUNAR Report; even if there is no answer from Command or Dispatch:
 - a. Location
 - b. Unit Number
 - c. Name
 - d. Assignment
 - e. Resources Needed/Your actions
3. Activate your PASS device; do not try to speak on radio with your PASS activated, silence when you are using your radio.
4. Attempt self-rescue.
5. If you are able to move, identify a safe haven where you can await rescue.
6. Lay on your side in a fetal position with your PASS device pointing out/up so that it can be heard.
7. Point your flashlight toward the ceiling.
8. Slow your breathing as much as possible to conserve your air supply.

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Response to a Mayday

Radio Communications:

As soon as a Mayday is heard radio silence shall be maintained by all units, with the exception of the Incident Commander (Command), the RIT Group (RIT), and the personnel involved in the Mayday.

Command may have all incident operations move to another frequency, and have the Mayday operations stay on the original radio frequency. It is imperative that during a situation of this kind that only pertinent radio traffic is relayed to operating companies.

Basic Self-Rescue Techniques:

Following the declaration of a Mayday, the following steps should be considered when attempting self-rescue by locating and following a hose line to an exit:

1. Stay calm and control your breathing.
2. Systematically search the room to locate a hose line.
3. Follow the hose line to a hose coupling.
4. Identify the male and female ends of the coupling.
5. Move from the female coupling to the male coupling.
6. Follow the hose out.
7. Exit the hazard area.
8. Notify command of your location.
9. If unable to exit, assume the downed firefighter position in a safe location, and notify command of your actions.

Following the declaration of a Mayday, the following steps should be considered when attempting to locate a door or window that can be used for exit:

1. Stay calm and control your breathing.
2. Systematically locate a wall.
3. Use a sweeping motion on the outside wall to locate an alternative exit.
4. Identify the opening as a window, interior door, or external door.
5. If the first opening identified is not adequate, continue to search.
6. Exit the room safely if possible.
7. If unable to exit, assume the downed firefighter position in a safe location, and notify command of your actions.

Following the declaration of a Mayday, the following steps should be considered when attempting to open a wall, to force exit from a building/room within the building:

1. Identify deteriorating conditions that require exiting through a wall.

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2. Use a hand tool or your feet to open a hole in the wall between two studs.
3. Enlarge the hole.
4. Enter the hole, head first to check the floor and fire conditions on the other side of the wall.
5. Sling the SCBA to one side to reduce your profile.
6. Escape through the opening in the wall.
7. Adjust the SCBA straps to their normal position.
8. Assist others through the opening in the wall.
9. Report your status to command.
10. If unable to exit, assume the downed firefighter position in a safe location, and notify command of your actions.

Following the declaration of a Mayday, the following steps should be considered when attempting escape from entanglement:

1. Stay calm and control your breathing.
2. Change your position—back up or turn on your side to try to free yourself.
3. Use the swimmer stroke to try to free yourself.
4. Loosen the SCBA straps, remove one arm, and slide the pack to the front of your body to free the SCBA.
5. Cut the wires or cables causing the entanglement.
6. If you are unable to disentangle yourself, notify command of your situation.
7. If you are able to exit, notify command that you are out of danger.

Deployment of Rapid Intervention Team

As defined by [SOG 3.2 Operations at Structure Fires](#), a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) will be formally established once the fire has been declared an All Hands/Working Fire. The RIT will be staffed as determined by Command, based upon size and complexity of the incident.

In all situations where there is a Mayday on the fireground, the RIT will be deployed immediately, and shall quickly gather available information about the crew/firefighter and deploy to that location as quickly as possible to affect a firefighter rescue.

When the RIT has been deployed, the Safety Officer assumes command of the RIT Group.

It is important to note that fireground operations must continue in order to maintain/reduce hazards to the affected firefighter/crew. Operations may be shunted around protection of the Mayday Company, but will not be shut down.