

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES		
Rowan County Fire and Rescue Association		EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/16/2009 POLICY NUMBER: REVISION DATE: 11/16/2023
SECTION: INCIDENT OPERATIONS	SECTION TITLE: MAYDAY	
ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT ADOPTION SIGNATURE:		DATE: 11/16/2023

“MAY-DAY” PROCEDURES PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to designate a standardized system of alerting fireground personnel of a “**MAY-DAY**” message to report lost, trapped, missing, low/malfunctioning air supply or injured firefighters. This policy incorporates the procedures utilized to make smooth transmissions of radio communications from fire ground to fire ground operatives and from fire ground to communication center dispatchers.

INTRODUCTION:

The possibilities exist for firefighters to become lost, trapped, missing, low on air or experience an air supply malfunction during combat situations. These situations can occur when firefighters become separated from their crews, building conditions change rapidly cutting off egress or firefighters become disoriented or injured just to name a few.

DISCUSSION: “MAY-DAY”

Any member operating on the fire ground may initiate a report of “**MAY-DAY**”. All “**MAY-DAY**” messages will receive priority radio traffic. The term “**MAY-DAY**” will be reserved **ONLY** to report lost, trapped, injured, low/malfunctioning air supply or missing firefighters.

“MAY-DAY” PROCEDURE:

Once fire personnel have found themselves to be in a **MAY-DAY** parameter (lost, trapped, missing personnel or low/malfunctioning air supply) personnel should initiate the **MAY-DAY** protocol utilizing one of the following best practices for the situation.

Procedure 1.0

Verbal Issuance of ‘MAY-DAY’ on Assigned Tactical Talk-Group

This situation is the preferred method of MAY-DAY protocol activation, but may also occur when the firefighter is unable to physically activate the emergency button and then verbalizes the MAY-DAY on the assigned operation (ops) talk-group.

The information listed below should follow the “MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY, MAY- DAY” given by the unit in distress.

1. Command should acknowledge there has been a **MAY-DAY** called by first setting off the radio alert two tone over the fire ground operations channel being used. Once the alert tone ceases, announce via radio that all radio traffic should cease other than the unit calling the **MAY-DAY**.

If there is no answer from the Incident Commander or any other unit on the fire ground, after attempting to call “MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY for a second time, the distressed unit calling the MAY-DAY should move to Procedure 2.0 of the MAY-DAY protocol.

2. Once the radio airwaves are clear from the Incident Commander, the unit with the **MAY-DAY** should announce their **L.U.N.A.R.** protocol as follows:

L – Location – such as floor, room, side of building

U – Unit Number

N – Person(s) Name

A – Assignment – what task they were involved in when the emergency occurred -

Air - What is the status of the crew’s air supply.

R – Resources – what additional resources are needed

3. Command should confirm the **MAY-DAY** transmission by repeating the **L.U.N.A.R.** given by the distressed unit and instruct the distressed unit to:
 - Initiate his/her/crew’s P.A.S.S. device(s)
 - If able, attempt self-extrication or create emergency egress from area.
 - Conserve air supply
 - Stay low
 - Shine/flash an illumination device or flashlight
 - Shelter in place
4. The Incident Commander must make rapid and concise decisions to increase the survivability of those who may be lost, trapped, missing, injured, low/malfunctioning air supply. Command should make tactical decisions based off structural integrity, fire progress and operational crews geographical locations on how to direct crews to assist the **MAY-DAY** unit.
5. Initiate RIT Team (3 person crew minimum)
6. Structure Softening = make sure all doors, windows or egress points are in the “ready” to be easily opened for exiting RIT/Rescue personnel.
7. An additional EMS crew should be requested to aid in the RIT and medical monitoring sectors.
8. An additional alarm may be requested by the Incident Commander. If this request is made all additional alarm units should report to the location designated by the Incident Commander.
9. A RIT Group Leader should be established by competent personnel on scene if a RIT Team is deployed and relief RIT crews are established. A RIT Group leader should also be put into play if multiple RIT Teams are established to cover personnel that are spread out at a larger incident area (large box structure, warehouse, etc.)
10. Withdraw companies operating in reported danger areas when deemed necessary.
11. Do not abandon Firefighting positions if possible, these positions are critical and must be held to keep the fire from making forward progress.
12. Ventilate to relieve heat and gases where needed to increase survivability.
13. Request PAR of all companies
 - PAR = Number of firefighters and location / pump operators not included (i.e. Quint 1 Par 2 1st floor “A” side, 1 at the pump)

AWARENESS:

RIT Crews should consider be aware of the following information when searching for members initiating a “**MAY-DAY**”

- Visible sightings of firefighters (Arms, Legs, etc.)
- Know last known location
- Listen for PASS devices
- Listen for shouts for help
- Listen for Tapping noises
- Listen for SCBA bells or vibra-alerts
- Trace attack hose and lines
- Look for Flashlight beams
- Look for the location of equipment being used by lost, missing, trapped firefighters
- Search immediate doorways first
- Open and unlock all doors
- Search hallways before interior rooms
- Search exterior walls inside before searching open spaces
- Search utilizing search ropes

Procedure 2.0

Radio Activation and Verbal Issuance of ‘MAY-DAY’

This situation occurs when the firefighter is unable to make contact with Incident Command or any other personnel monitoring the assigned operation (ops) talk-group. The ORANGE emergency button should be held by the unit calling the MAY-DAY for approximately 2 seconds. This will take the radio to the emergency channel and make the communication center aware that an emergency button has been depressed and a MAY-DAY is occurring.

The information listed below should follow the “MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY, MAY- DAY.....(no answer) MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY, MAY- DAY” given by the unit in distress.

1. The **ORANGE** emergency button should be held by the unit calling the **MAY-DAY** for approximately 2 seconds. This will take the radio of the unit calling the **MAY-DAY** to the emergency channel and make the communication center aware that an emergency button has been depressed and a **MAY-DAY** is occurring.
2. The Telecommunicator should then attempt to obtain the following **L.U.N.A.R.** protocol information if not already verbalized by the unit calling the **MAY-DAY**:
L – Location – such as floor, room, side of building
U – Unit Number
N – Person(s) Name
A – Assignment – what task they were involved in when the emergency occurred -
Air - What is the status of the crew’s air supply.
R – Resources – what additional resources are needed
3. The Telecommunicator will advise Incident Command of the ‘**MAY-DAY**’ and the information received.

4. Command should request the communication center patch the emergency channel and the main (ops) Operation Channel together. While the patch is in progress, the Incident Commander on the emergency channel should confirm the **MAY-DAY** transmission information given by the communication center by repeating the **L.U.N.A.R.** given by the distressed unit and instruct the distressed unit to:
 - Initiate his/her/crew's P.A.S.S. device(s)
 - If able attempt self-extrication or create emergency egress from area.
 - Conserve air supply
 - Stay low
 - Shine/flash a illumination device or flashlight
 - Shelter in place
5. The incident commander must make rapid and concise decisions to increase the survivability of those who may be lost, trapped, injured, low air supply or missing. Command should make tactical decisions based off structural integrity, fire progress and operational crews geographical locations on how to direct crews to assist the **MAY-DAY** unit.
6. Initiate RIT Team (3 person crew minimum)
7. Structure Softening = make sure all doors, windows or egress points are in the “ready” to be easily opened for exiting RIT/Rescue personnel.
8. An additional EMS crew should be requested to aid in the RIT and medical monitoring sectors.
9. An additional alarm may be requested by the Incident Commander. If this request is made all additional alarm units should report to the location designated by the Incident Commander.
10. A RIT Group Leader should be established by competent personnel on scene if a RIT Team is deployed and relief RIT crews are established. A RIT Group leader should also be put into play if multiple RIT Teams are established in order to cover personnel that are spread out at a larger incident area.
11. Withdraw companies operating in reported danger areas when deemed necessary.
12. Do not abandon Firefighting positions if possible, these positions are critical and must be held to keep the fire from making forward progress.
13. Ventilate to relieve heat and gases where needed to increase survivability.
14. Request PAR of all companies
 - a. PAR = Number of firefighters and location / pump operators not included (i.e. Quint 1 Par 2 1st floor “A” side, 1 at the pump)

AWARENESS:

RIT Crews should consider be aware of the following information when searching for members initiating a “**MAY-DAY**”

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- Look for the location of equipment being used by lost, missing, trapped firefighters

- Search immediate doorways first
- Open and unlock all doors
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- Search exterior walls inside before searching open spaces
- Search utilizing search ropes

TERMINATION

“**MAY-DAY**” reports may only be terminated by the Incident Commander. A MAY-DAY will be terminated by Incident Commander once successful retrieval of the unit(s) calling the MAY-DAY have been removed from harm/IDLH atmosphere.

The Incident Commander may make the determination that no further risk to personnel will be pursued in attempts to rescue a unit(s) calling a MAY-DAY due to rapid fire progression, structural integrity/collapse or any other risk benefit analysis where risk out ways the reward.