
Section: 5.13 Mayday Procedure

Effective Date: 09/04/2007

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Approved by: SMFD Officers 04/26/2006

SCOPE

This guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Department personnel responsible for emergency response.

PURPOSE

To establish a procedure to be used when calling for assistance and to notify all personnel on the emergency scene that an imminent life-threatening situation exists.

DEFINITIONS

Mayday: A radio term used to alert the Incident Commander or other persons on the emergency scene that personnel are in an imminent life-threatening situation.

Personnel Accountability Report or Roll Call (PAR): A term used to track and report the location, status, and welfare of personnel assigned to a given crew.

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT): A crew specifically designated by the Incident Commander at the scene of an emergency beyond the initial stages, consisting of a minimum of two personnel, one preferably being a company officer. The RIT shall be primarily available for the rescue of Fire Department members should the need arise. Depending on the size and complexity of the incident, the Incident Commander shall establish one or more RITs. The RIT normally replaces or enhances the standby team (2-In/2-Out), which was required during the initial stages of the incident.

PROCEDURE

- A. Verbal Report of a Missing Member
1. When an officer or firefighter is notified or becomes aware that a member may be missing, they shall immediately contact their officer or Incident Commander.
 2. If possible a systematic search should be conducted in the area of the member's last known location. Assistance shall be requested if the crews already operating in the area cannot carry out this task.
 3. The Incident Commander shall make an announcement to all units identifying the missing member, their last known location and directing anyone knowing the whereabouts of the missing member to immediately notify Command or another designated officer (preferably the Accountability Officer) via radio.
 4. All radio traffic on the fireground radio channel not associated with the Mayday or PAR shall cease.
 5. The Incident Commander shall designate an officer to assume responsibility for monitoring the fireground radio channel from a location on the incident scene that is away from distractions and other noises.
 6. The Incident Commander shall confirm, via direct radio contact, that all units and the company officer from the missing member's last assignment and/or any unit currently operating in the immediate area that they are aware a member is now missing. The

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Incident Commander shall also complete a PAR of these specific units during this radio conversation.

7. The Incident Commander shall deploy the RIT to assist with conducting a systematic search in the area of their last known location. If the missing member is accounted for after the announcement, and after the systematic search of the area, the RIT will be directed to return to their previous location and standby.
8. The Incident Commander shall designate a secondary RIT whenever the primary crew is deployed. This shall be done using uncommitted units already on the incident scene or by requesting additional units.
9. The Incident Commander shall provide the Accountability Officer with the PAR for the units they contacted. The Accountability Officer shall conduct a PAR of all other personnel on the fireground (pausing as necessary so that a radio call for help can be heard) to ensure that all other members are accounted for.
10. The PAR shall be done in order of companies working within the most hazardous areas first, then working outward until all members are accounted for.
11. Companies shall be called at least twice. If there is no answer, anyone within the immediate area and answering the PAR will be directed to check on the welfare of non-answering company.
12. If additional members within a company are not accounted for, the Incident Commander shall deploy the secondary RIT to assist with conducting a systematic search in the area of the missing member's last known location.
13. When the missing member within a company is located, the Incident Commander shall notify DISPATCH that the Mayday has been cleared.

B. PASS Device Activation

During any operation involving the use of PASS devices, all personnel in the immediate vicinity on the scene shall acknowledge the activation of a PASS device (lasting for greater than five seconds). This shall be done by immediately proceeding to the location of the alarm and confirming the status of the member via radio with the Incident Commander.

C. Confirmed Report from a Trapped or Lost Member

1. When a member becomes trapped, disoriented, lost, or injured, and needs assistance, they shall attempt to notify their company officer, or someone in the immediate area that assistance is needed.
2. If there is no response from anyone in the immediate area, a radio message shall be transmitted by the member to the Incident Commander.
3. The radio message shall begin with; "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday," and shall include the following information:
 - **Location** - last known location including floor number, quadrant, etc.
 - **Unit** - identification of the crew and their unit or sector assignment.
 - **Name** - name of the individuals that need rescue or recovery.
 - **Assignment** - the last known assignment given to the individuals.

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- **Resources needed** - what equipment is needed to implement the rescue plan.
4. After completing the radio message, the member's PASS device shall be activated and remain activated, if possible, to draw attention to the area where assistance is needed.
 5. Trapped or lost members shall remain together at all times, attempting to perform any self-rescue techniques they have been taught. They shall remain in the immediate area unless they are able to find and follow a hose line to the exterior of the structure. Any change in their location, status, condition, etc., shall be reported via a radio message.
 6. When the Incident Commander receives a Mayday, they shall immediately acknowledge it and repeat the LUNAR information.
 - a. They shall ensure that the companies operating in the same areas as the missing member are aware of the situation.
 - b. When crews are working in the same immediate area as the trapped or lost member, they may make an initial rescue attempt provided that they notify the Incident Commander of their location, their current operational duties, and receive direction to attempt the initial rescue.
 - (1) If they are unable to quickly affect the rescue or locate the missing member, they shall be directed to return to their operational assignment upon being relieved by the RIT crew. All company officers shall ensure that any rescue or search for the missing member is coordinated and at the direction of the Incident Commander.
 - (2) When a quick rescue cannot be accomplished, the Incident Commander shall request that DISPATCH transmit the Mayday alert tone.
 - c. The Incident Commander shall deploy the RIT to assist with the rescue of the trapped or lost member.
 7. The Incident Commander shall make the following announcements to all units identifying the trapped or lost member(s) and repeat the applicable LUNAR information.
 - a. The Incident Commander shall identify which units or RIT has been assigned to assist the trapped or lost member.
 - b. All units shall be directed to maintain radio silence on the fireground radio channel unless the radio traffic is related to the trapped or missing member or another emergency condition that develops.
 - c. If it becomes necessary to continue operational radio traffic, an alternate radio channel can be used for that purpose provided that an announcement is made to indicate the channel change.
 8. The Incident Commander shall ensure that the units on the fireground continue their operational assignments, unless doing so places the trapped or lost member in imminent danger.
- D. Rapid Intervention Team Deployment

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RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. All Operational Personnel shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Ensuring that their company officer is apprised of their location and progress.
 - 2. Complying with the procedures established in this guideline.

- B. Incident Commanders and company officers shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Maintaining the whereabouts and well being of their crew and any members assigned to their functional area.
 - 2. Maintaining an accurate accountability of these members and be prepared to reply to a PAR request without delay.