


MAY DAY (Low-Air, Lost, or Missing FF)

- o Once a “**Mayday**” is declared the IC shall for **Emergency Traffic**.
- o Dispatch sets 2 Alert Tones (5 Seconds).
- o Dispatch Announces Emergency traffic-all units stand-by.
- o Obtain a **LUNAR**
- o Consider **additional alarm**
- o Activate **RIC/RIG**
- o Conduct a **PAR** (face to face is preferred).
- o Restructure Incident making FF Rescue #1 priority.
- o Designate Chief Officer (ISO Preferred) to manage Mayday.
- o Position personnel at windows/doors to listen for down FF.
- o Decide if RIC TAC Channel is needed.
- o When Mayday is clear announce to dispatch Emergency Traffic All clear.

	Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Standard Operating Guideline	
	SOG 220-04	Mayday
	Issue Date: 05/21/2018	Effective Date: 06/21/2018

PURPOSE:

To provide general and emergency radio procedures while operating on training or emergency incidents.

AUTHORITY:

- Fire Rescue Administrator

SCOPE:

This standard guideline shall apply to all Emergency Operations personnel.

PROCEDURE:

1. Mayday defined

- a. The term **“Mayday”** should be used when a firefighter(s) is:
 - i. Lost
 - ii. Trapped
 - iii. Disoriented
 - iv. Seriously injured
 - v. Experiencing (or potential of) an air emergency
 - vi. In need of immediate help
- b. Any Fire Rescue personnel may use the term **“Mayday”**, for themselves or others.
- c. If any Fire Rescue personnel experiences a **“Mayday”** then that entire company must exit the IDLH.
- d. If an additional TAC channel is required during a Mayday operation:
 - i. The Mayday operation must remain on the original channel.
 - ii. The fire suppression or tactical activities shall switch channels.

2. Dispatcher Responsibilities

- a. Once a **“Mayday”** is declared, the Dispatcher shall follow Emergency Traffic in *SOG 210-01 Communications*. In addition, the Dispatcher shall:
 - i. Call for **“Emergency Traffic”** (If the Incident Commander does not).
 - ii. Relay pertinent information to the Incident Commander or Mayday firefighter.
 - iii. Notify the Fire Operations Officer and Dispatch Supervisor.
 - iv. Put Trauma Hawk on stand-by.

3. Incident Command Responsibilities

- a. The ability to control resources and personnel during a Mayday situation may be the most difficult and challenging incident an Incident Commander will ever manage. It is critical that the Incident Commander maintains:
 - i. A strong command presence
 - ii. Composure
 - iii. Self-control
 - iv. Self-discipline
- b. Once a “**Mayday**” is declared the Incident Commander shall:
 - i. Call for “**Emergency Traffic**”.
 - ii. Obtain a LUNAR from the Mayday firefighter.
 - iii. Consider an additional Alarm.
 - iv. Activate the Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) or Rapid Intervention Group (RIG).
 - v. Conduct a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR), face-to-face is preferred.
 - vi. Restructure the Incident Objectives, giving firefighter Rescue a priority.
 - vii. Designate another Chief Officer to manage the Mayday, the ISO is preferred.
 - viii. Position additional personnel on the exterior of windows and doors to look and listen for the Mayday firefighter.
 - ix. Determine if an additional TAC channel is required.

4. Incident Safety Officer Responsibilities

- a. Once a “**Mayday**” is declared, the Incident Safety Officer should consider requesting an Assistant Safety Officer(s).
- b. Refer to *SOG 200-03 Safety Officers*.

5. Rapid Intervention Company (RIC)

- a. Once a “**Mayday**” is declared, deployment of the RIC/RIG should be sufficient in number to safely locate and extricate each missing firefighter.
- b. Refer to *SOG 420-04 Rapid Intervention Crew*.

6. Company Responsibilities (Non-RIC/RIG)

- a. Personnel not actively engaged in the Mayday emergency should exercise radio silence. Exceptions to this are the:
 - i. Incident Commander
 - ii. Mayday firefighter(s)
 - iii. RIC/RIG
 - iv. RIG Supervisor
 - v. Other Companies directly involved in the Rescue efforts.

- b. Personnel assigned to other tasks (i.e., Fire Attack, Ventilation, etc...) must overcome the desire to get involved in the rescue of the Mayday firefighter(s).

7. Firefighter who declares Mayday Responsibilities

- a. Once a “**Mayday**” is recognized it shall be declared, the firefighter shall (in preferred order):
 - i. Activate the orange emergency button on the portable radio.
 - 1. Push and hold the orange emergency button for 4 seconds (either the portable or remote speaker mic).
 - 2. The orange emergency button activation:
 - a. Sends an emergency alert to all Communication Center consoles.
 - b. Initiates 20 seconds of an open mic.
 - ii. Announce “**Mayday, Mayday, Mayday**” on the TAC channel.
 - iii. Report critical information in a LUNAR format:
 - 1. **Location** (last known position) (i.e., Charlie side, 2nd Floor)
 - 2. **Unit** (person was assigned to) (i.e., R74)
 - 3. **Name** (name of Mayday firefighter) (i.e., Smith)
 - 4. **Air** (supply remaining) (i.e., 1500)
 - 5. **Resources** (what is needed or reason for emergency) (i.e., K-12,
Ladder, lost, trapped, serious injury, air emergency, etc...)
 - iv. Manually activate their pass device.
 - 1. The pass device should remain on until the Mayday firefighter is located by the RIC/RIG.
 - 2. If the pass device interferes with communications, the pass device may be turned off temporarily.
 - 3. Once the communication is completed, the pass device must be manually reactivated.
 - v. Attempt to Self-Rescue (as appropriate, see below).

8. Self-Rescue

- a. General
 - i. Mayday firefighters should stay intact as a Company to enhance their chances of being found and rescued.
- b. Air Supply during a Mayday:
 - i. A conscious effort must be made by Mayday firefighters to control their breathing.
 - ii. Mayday firefighters should avoid nonessential talking or nonessential physical activity during this time. Mayday firefighters must control and pace their physical exertion activities in order to extend their SCBA air supply.
 - iii. If the SCBA air supply is depleted, as a last resort, the firefighter can use a particulate filter or use their Nomex hood as a filter. The hood may be

placed in or over the facepiece regulator attachment area. Do NOT remove the SCBA facepiece.

c. Self-Extraction

- i. If physically able, Mayday firefighters should search for an exit.
- ii. Generally, Mayday firefighters should not abandon a hose line. If able, firefighters should try to follow the hose line out of the structure.
- iii. If Mayday firefighters are unable to find a door, window, or other egress they should attempt to find an exterior wall.
- iv. Once at a wall, Mayday firefighters should search for doorways, windows, and hallways, which generally lead to the outside.

d. Area of Safe Refuge

- i. An Area of Safe Refuge is a protective area free from hazard (i.e., a room or floor isolated from heat and the flow path).
- ii. When a Mayday firefighter cannot find a way out, but there is an Area of Safe Refuge, they should take advantage of this location and advise the Rescue operation.
- iii. When in the Area of Safe Refuge, a Mayday firefighter should:
 1. Be next to a wall, doorway, or hallway.
 - a. This increases the chances of a quick discovery by the RIC.
 2. Assume a horizontal position on the floor.
 - a. This maximizes the audible effects of the PASS device.
 3. Position a flashlight toward the ceiling.
 - a. This increases the chances of the light to be seen.
 4. Make tapping noises.
 - a. This provides audible alerts to the rescuers.

9. Ending the Mayday

- a. When the Incident Commander determines the Mayday operation is completed, the TAC channel may be released in accordance with Emergency Traffic in *SOG 210-01 Communications*.

10. Post incident

- a. Refer to *SOG 430-01 After Action Review*.
- b. MAYDAYS can be the most significant event in a firefighter's career (for all involved, including the Incident Commander), therefore the Incident Commander should consider activation of the CISM team. Refer to Critical Incident Stress Management (PPM FR-T-501) and Crisis Mitigation Program (PPM FR-T-502).

Supersession History

1. SOG #1505, issued 10/01/2012
2. SOG #1505, issued 06/22/2017
3. SOG #1505 Firefighter Survival renamed Mayday, 04/01/2018

4. SOG 200-04, clerical 05/01/2018
5. SOG 200-04, issued 05/21/2018