



GALENA FIRE DEPARTMENT
Standard Operating Guideline
MAYDAY PROCEDURE

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January 1, 2021

SOG: 023
Effective: 01Apr13
Rev: 14Sep15
Rev: 02Oct18
Rev: 01Jan2021
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Purpose To establish standard procedures for activating a “MAYDAY” when Fire Rescue Personnel require immediate rescue from hazardous situations.

Overview

GFD personnel will use the emergency radio transmission - “MAYDAY” - to announce that they are in imminent danger and in need of immediate rescue. The term “MAYDAY” is an international signal used as a distress call for assistance. All GFD members at an emergency scene are empowered to call a “MAYDAY”. The Incident Safety Officer must advise the Incident Commander of any conditions that could prove dangerous to personnel working the scene. Operational radio communications will be integrated and expanded in the event of a MAYDAY.

Every interior structural firefighter, and those involved in any operation that could result in serious danger to a firefighter will be radio equipped. Emergency incidents in which a “MAYDAY” call would be transmitted over the radio include, but are not limited to:

- Fireground Operations.
- Motor Vehicle Accidents.
- Mass Casualty Incidents.
- Hazardous Material Incidents.
- Special Operations Incidents.
- Emergency Medical Incidents.

Special Conditions that Warrant a “MAYDAY” Transmission

Firefighter is pinned or trapped.

Structural collapse with missing or injured firefighter.

Any incapacitating firefighter injury.

SCBA malfunction while in an IDLH atmosphere with no means of rapid egress.

Firefighter is unaccounted for during a PAR report.

Firefighter has fallen through a roof, floor, or down-stairs.

Firefighter cannot exit by door or window within sixty (60) seconds.

Anytime time any firefighter is in imminent danger and requires immediate rescue the specific problem does not matter if the problem is a threat to a firefighter.

“MAYDAY” Procedure

Personnel who call a “Mayday” should clearly repeat the word three times , and if possible, include information regarding:

- Where they are located or recognizable point of reference (basement, A-B-C D side of building etc.)?
- How many firefighters are involved?
- What is the specific problem encountered?
- Any special tools or equipment needed for rescue?
- Severity and type of injuries that have been sustained?
- Does the firefighter who is missing have a radio?
- Is there an imminent danger that might impact a trapped firefighter?



MAYDAY

Initial Incident Command Responsibilities

Once a "Mayday" has been transmitted, all non-essential radio transmissions will be limited. Only radio transmission related to critical functions, including the "MAYDAY" rescue operation is appropriate at this point, and until MAYDAY operations conclude.

The Incident Commander will immediately announce the "MAYDAY" to all units on scene and declare "Emergency Traffic Only".

The Incident Commander will notify Dispatch of the "MAYDAY" and request additional resources as needed.

The Incident Commander will assign a Rapid Intervention Team - (RIT Group) to begin immediate rescue operations. Upon assuming rescue operations, the RIT Group will function as 'MAYDAY Group'.

All personnel will continue to operate on the previously designated operations channel. The MAYDAY Group designation will be integrated within the IC framework in order that all operations personnel and the MAYDAY group are operating on the same channel. This will allow overall operations communication consistency, and to avoid confusion by operating on multiple channels. Span of control will be maintained as per GFD policy.

Upon resolution of the "MAYDAY", the MAYDAY Group may be terminated and revert back to the RIT Group, at the discretion of the IC.

General Considerations

In order to ensure that a "MAYDAY" call is received by the Incident Commander, the following guidelines shall be applied:

The firefighter who initiates the "MAYDAY" transmission must, if possible, repeat the signal until it is acknowledged either by the Incident Commander, an Officer or Dispatch.

Any Officer or Dispatcher hearing a "MAYDAY" transmission and realizing that it is not being acknowledged by the Incident Commander, must:

- Acknowledge the call and ascertain the nature of the call.
- Immediately communicate all information to the Incident Commander.

It is important to remember that all incidents are unique. Unusual primary tactics may have to be adapted to the existing conditions. Operational staffing at an incident involving a "Mayday" will normally be strained to the utmost. It shall be of primary importance that ALL personnel on the emergency scene promptly obey the commands given by Officers.

Fireground personnel shall be prepared to respond to complex and exacting directives. Fire conditions may be such that the Incident Commander may order the use of multiple hand lines, and fire streams may be placed into operation in various configurations, including but not limited to, exterior, tandem, and/or opposing attack profiles. It is imperative to remember that not all possibilities can be specified in policy. Therefore, the tactics used must be conducive to maintaining survivable conditions for the trapped or missing members.