

	<b>MAYDAY INCIDENT GUIDELINE</b>	<b>2014revA</b>
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## Procedure:

All members shall use the term “mayday” to initiate radio traffic that communicates a fire ground emergency. This transmission is an indication that a life threatening situation has developed.

A mayday is defined as: anytime a firefighter cannot safely exit an IDLH hazard zone.

Mayday is communicated in situations where immediate communication is necessary to protect life or prevent injury. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Injured firefighter unable to exit IDLH environment
- Trapped, lost or missing firefighter
- Low/out of air situations

## Description of Event

Firefighters must not delay reporting to Command if they find themselves in a mayday situation. The rescue of lost, trapped or seriously injured firefighters from the emergency scene is critically time sensitive. The universal radio message “mayday” shall be used to report their status and need for assistance. Any firefighter can use the mayday call to report a life-threatening situation.

- The crew/firefighter declaring the mayday shall activate the orange button on their portable radio as the first step in declaring a mayday.
  - This will automatically move the firefighter to the emergency talk group designated for emergencies – “MAYDAY S.”

When communicating a mayday, the firefighter should include information critical for the rescue. LFRA has adopted “LUNAR” as the acronym to assist with providing critical information to the incident commander. LUNAR stands for:

- Location or last known location, landmarks, sights and sounds.
- Unit crew/FF designation.
- Name last name of firefighter experiencing the mayday. If multiple firefighter's are involved then all members must be identified.
- Air supply status.
- Resources needed, if known, for rescue.

In addition to reporting the LUNAR acronym to Command the reporting firefighter should also include what type of emergency they are experiencing such as a trapped, lost, injured firefighter, etc. The following is an example of the standard method of transmitting a mayday:

*Activate Emergency button... “Mayday, mayday, mayday...Crew 5 (last name of crew members) has been caught in a floor collapse and fallen into the basement. Air supply is at 2000 psi and need assistance getting out.”*

(See LFRA Training Manual – Mayday)

### Command Responsibilities

The incident commander shall accomplish the following list of actions upon receipt of a mayday:

- Acknowledge the mayday
- Activate emergency traffic tone
- Deployment of Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC)
- Modify Incident Action Plan
- Upgrade the alarm assignment and order additional EMS
- Maintain fire suppression operations
- Maintain accountability
- Control communications
- Monitor structural stability
- Notify Chief Officers

### Acknowledge the Mayday

The incident commander and Dispatch will monitor the Emergency talk group (A Bank – channel 8 – ‘MAYDAY S’) during all IDLH incidents.

The incident commander shall acknowledge the mayday report and respond back with the following to the mayday firefighter(s):

- Communicate to the mayday firefighters you’ve received their mayday and will be deploying resources for the rescue
- Verbally state to the mayday firefighter(s); “Remain calm, control your breathing, and maintain situational awareness (SA)”
- Maintain radio contact to get a sufficient amount of information in order to implement an adequate rescue IAP
- Have them activate their PASS device if necessary, based on the situation and attempt self-rescue
- Continue to communicate with the mayday firefighter(s) the actions being taken

### Activate Emergency Traffic Tone

The incident commander shall transmit an emergency traffic tone for four (4) seconds. This could be completed from the command post or using the dispatch center and shall be transmitted on the fire ground channel. Following the tone, the mayday is announced, with the location or area given, if known. An example may include:

“All units, emergency radio traffic, mayday on the fire ground, Crew 5’s been caught in a floor collapse and fallen into the basement. We will remain in offensive strategy, very high risk, completing rescue. All units hold routine radio traffic.”

### Deployment of Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC)

The RIC should be deployed once a mayday call is received. The RIC should proceed to the area of rescue with a basic complement of tools and equipment for initial rescue operations. The RIC should evaluate the situation, with EMS and air management as the priorities.

(See LFRA Training Manual on RIC Operations)

## Modify Incident Action Plan (IAP)

The IAP should be modified to a high priority rescue effort. The IC may need to evaluate the situation in an effort to determine:

- “What do I have?” (What is the current situation?)
- “What do I need?” (What resources and equipment are needed?)
- “What am I doing?” (What actions are being conducted?)

The command organizational model may need to be expanded. LFRA’s standard organizational model utilizes the “two-box” system which includes Attack Group and Support Group. The IC may choose to place the appropriate Group Supervisor in charge of the rescue effort and support their needs with the required resources. If Divisions are being used, the IC may choose to delegate the rescue effort to that supervisor who is responsible for the area the mayday is occurring and support with the needed resources.

The use of additional Battalion Chiefs who arrive on scene should be utilized in the most efficient manner. Chief Officers should be placed into tactical level supervision positions to support the fire ground emergency and help maintain situational awareness.

The “Help Order” should be considered when developing a rescue plan during a mayday.

1. Communicate to mayday firefighter self-rescue techniques to assist with the rescue.
2. Use a mayday firefighter(s) own company to assist with the rescue.
3. Use a company already located inside of the hazard zone to assist with the rescue.
4. Use on-deck Company located outside of the hazard zone as a RIC crew.

## Resource Needs

The next greater alarm should be ordered by the IC at a minimum and additional alarms may be needed depending on the severity of the incident. The IC should maintain enough resources to manage the rescue operation as well as the suppression operations that need to continue. The IC shall maintain a tactical reserve (three deep: resources in hot zone, on-deck, staged). The IC should also evaluate what EMS resources are needed and order the appropriate EMS response.

### **Maintain Fire Suppression Operations**

Controlling and extinguishing the fire gives the entire team the time needed to resolve the mayday. The IC and Division/Group Supervisors, if established, shall continue fire suppression efforts if any active fire exists during a mayday; interior crews that are actively addressing fire control when a mayday occurs should continue with their fire control efforts.

Company officers already assigned into the hazard zone may be in the best position to perform a rescue of a mayday firefighter. This officer may need to complete an assessment of what is occurring and take appropriate action to minimize injury/death.

Task level operations should continue to be completed when a mayday has occurred to give interior crews the best chance of completing a rescue. Hose lines may need to be stretched to support the rescue, a continuation of ventilation, lighting and hardening of exits are all necessary to support the rescue operation.

### **Maintain Accountability**

Some types of maydays may require the IC to perform a Personal Accountability Report (PAR) to determine the scope of the problem and what units were affected by the conditions. These PAR's must be driven by the IC for personnel operating within the emergency scene perimeter.

The IC shall maintain fire ground accountability throughout the rescue operation. If not already established, the IC should get tactical level supervision in place. Strong entry control is needed where the mayday is occurring to prevent unassigned entries into the area of rescue. On-deck crews must properly equip themselves, have a rescue plan and be ordered into the hazard zone by the IC and/or D/G Supervisors prior to making entry.

### Control Communications

The IC must start out the communications under control and continue to control the communications throughout the rescue event. All operating units will maintain radio silence once a mayday has been transmitted. All operating units will only transmit:

- Mayday announcements (you're having a mayday)
- Priority traffic
- Status change reports during a mayday

The IC will conduct mayday operations on the designated mayday channel and any assigned resources to the rescue effort will need to move their radio traffic to this channel. Fire ground operations will continue to use the assigned talk groups identified prior to the mayday.

### Monitor Structural Stability

The IC should designate a member on the fire ground to monitor and watch for structural stability during extended mayday operations.

### Notify Chief Officers

The IC shall notify LFRA Command Staff in the event of a mayday.

### Clearing Mayday Operations

Once all affected firefighters have been removed from the hazard zone and the treatment/transport is underway, the IC will have to use the current critical fire ground factors to formulate a new strategy and IAP.

The suitability of personnel to continue to work in IDLH atmospheres will be directly impacted by the severity of the mayday.

The IC should contact the dispatch center and clear the mayday radio traffic. This announcement should include:

- Brief mayday conclusion report
- Strategy and IAP for next operational period in the incident
- Resource determination

## Benchmarks

The following benchmarks are utilized with mayday operations:

### Rescue Initiated

The IC shall communicate this benchmark with the dispatch center and fire ground companies indicating that a high priority rescue is under way. It also acknowledges a mayday has occurred and indicates a Rescue IAP is being developed. All units should hold radio traffic for Rescue IAP.

### Firefighter Located

Once the member, crew or group supervisor has located the mayday firefighter(s), they must communicate this benchmark to the IC. This is the first step in completing the firefighter rescue.

### Rescue Complete

The IC shall communicate this benchmark once the mayday(s) has been controlled and there is adequate treatment under way. All units should stand by for the clearing of the mayday by the IC.

## Revision History:

**3/20/15**      Update to current format, no changes in content.

## References:

Playbook F/F Emergency Operating Guide (2011, December) Loveland Fire Rescue, p. 1

Operational Directives 3.1.8 Lost or Trapped Firefighter (2005, June) Poudre Fire Authority, p. 1-4.

Operations Directive 1.5.3 Fire ground Emergencies (2004, August) South Metro Fire Rescue, p. 1-7.

Command SOP's Mayday SOP Draft (2013, February) Blue Card, p. 1-9.