



## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create a standardized response to a declared Mayday incident during emergency operations for an Incident Commander.

All personnel are responsible for understanding proper procedures when a Mayday has been declared during emergency operations.

## POLICY

### Command response to a missing firefighter:

The Incident Commander **SHALL ALWAYS** assume that a missing firefighter is lost or trapped in the building until the firefighter is located. Rapid, concise, decisions and actions shall be taken to increase survivability. The following is a list of actions to be taken by Command for a reported missing or trapped firefighter. These are guidelines and need not be accomplished in the order listed. They must, however, be accomplished rapidly.

### After receiving the Mayday Command shall:

#### 1. Declare a Mayday has been received

The Incident Commander will immediately announce the "MAYDAY" to all units on scene and declare "Emergency Traffic Only". Once a "Mayday" has been transmitted, all non-essential radio transmissions are prohibited. Only transmissions that are related to the Mayday rescue operation are appropriate at this point.

A second tactical channel will be immediately assigned.

The Incident Commander shall direct all units and personnel on scene NOT assigned to the Mayday to switch over to the second tactical channel to handle all other ongoing tactical priorities.

The RIC shall assist Command in monitoring radio traffic in the event of Mayday. Communications between Command, the RIC, and the missing firefighter(s) will remain on the radio channel from which the Mayday was received.

#### 2. Deploy the RIC

The RIC shall be deployed to begin the rescue effort typically beginning at the last reported work area. Command will also establish a backup RIC as soon as personnel are available.

#### 3. Formally assign a Safety Officer

If not already in place a Safety Officer shall be assigned to monitor activity and evaluate the safety of the operation. Other Safety Officer responsibilities will be to conduct an assessment of the hazards, thus allowing the Incident Commander to concentrate on the rescue effort. Division/Group supervisors must coordinate efforts to ensure that a safe and effective rescue operation is conducted.

Approved

Fire Chief



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:  
Section:  
Original Date:  
Revised Date:

4. Confirm with Dispatch that all radio channels are being monitored

Command shall ensure that Dispatch monitors all radio channels. If a lost firefighter declares emergency on a channel other than the fireground operations channel, Command must be immediately directed to the lost firefighters channel for direct communications. Upon receiving an emergency traffic activation (emergency button), Dispatch shall immediately contact the IC and announce the identification of the individual assigned that radio. Contact shall be immediately attempted to determine if an emergency exists.

5. Assign personnel to Command support functions

The Incident Commander should fill needed support functions as the Command Post as needed to assist in mitigating the emergency and/or mayday.

6. Request additional resources

Incident Commanders should immediately request an additional alarm, call back of personnel, possible mutual aid, and have EMS on scene standby.

7. Fireground Accountability

A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) shall be immediately requested from all companies operating on the fireground.

The Incident Commander will assign personnel to collect Accountability Tags (Level II).

8. Ensure needed fire suppression efforts are supported

Firefighting operations shall not be discontinued during the rescue operation. Command and fire crews shall take aggressive measures to protect trapped or missing firefighters from the effects of the fire. Efforts shall be concentrated on reinforcing existing positions, keeping the fire out of the rescue area, and providing appropriate ventilation and lighting. In some situations it may be appropriate to cease operations in some areas of the building in order to relocate companies to better protect the rescue effort.

9. Open/unlock exits

All doors in the immediate area of the search shall be unlocked or forced open, and the immediate interior area quickly searched. Where practical, doors shall be left open to provide an emergency escape route unless doing so will have negative effects on the fire. In all cases doors shall remain unlocked.

10. Re-evaluate strategy and tactics to support rescue efforts

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.

Once the rescue is complete Command will give the **ALL CLEAR** for normal communications to resume.

Approved

Fire Chief

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