



Standard Operating Guideline

Emergency Communications Procedures



Scope: Sacramento Regional Fire Departments

Policy Contact

Sacramento Regional Operations Group

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References

- California State Fire Firefighter Survival Guide
- California State Fire Rapid Intervention Crew Guide
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- IAFF Fire Ground Survival Guide

01. Guideline:

Establish basic communication procedures which fall outside of normal fire ground operations.

02. Definitions:

- 2.1 Emergency Radio Traffic:** Radio transmission used when important information and/or an immediate safety issue regarding the incident needs to be communicated.
- 2.2 Evacuation:** Radio transmission used to evacuate firefighters from IDLH area.
- 2.3 Mayday:** A designated radio broadcast to inform all personnel operating on an incident of a firefighter in distress.
- 2.4 PAR:** Personal Accountability Report. Mnemonic used on an emergency incident to update the IC on crew accountability.
- 2.5 CAN Report:** Conditions, Actions & Needs Report. Mnemonic used on an emergency incident to update the IC on emergency incident operations.
- 2.6 NUCAN:** Name, Unit/Location, Conditions, Actions, Needs. Mnemonic that can be used as a guide on an emergency incident when calling a mayday and/or receiving a mayday.

03. Procedures:

3.1 Emergency Radio Traffic

3.1.1 Criteria for reporting an emergency traffic:

- Missing firefighter(s)
- Change in strategy
- Locating a civilian
- Potential building collapse
- Locating an area of fire that is unknown to other companies
- Extraordinary hazard
- Additional situations which create an immediate danger to firefighters

3.1.2 Company responsibilities:

- Transmit, using resource identifier with the term “emergency traffic.”
- If not acknowledged after a couple of seconds, make a second transmission.
- After acknowledgment has been received, transmit your information.

3.1.3 Command responsibilities:

- Acknowledge the emergency traffic.
- Repeat message.
- Announce any operational changes.

3.1.4 Sample radio traffic:

- Unit: “Command, Engine 54, with emergency traffic.”
- Command: “All companies hold your radio traffic; unit with emergency traffic, go ahead with your traffic.”
- Unit: “There has been a partial building collapse on the Charlie/Delta corner. I recommend we evacuate the building and move to a defensive strategy.”
- Command: “Command copies a partial building collapse on the Charlie/Delta corner.”

3.1.5 Considerations:

- All personnel operating on the fire ground should hold all non-essential radio traffic.
- At the conclusion of the emergency traffic, the IC should transmit an “all clear, resume normal radio traffic.”

3.2 Evacuation Procedures

3.2.1 Radio transmission should be announced by transmitting an emergency traffic and state, “All companies evacuate the building.”

3.2.2 Evacuation signal:

- The evacuation signal will consist of repeated short blasts of the air-horn for a period of no longer than ten (10) seconds, followed by ten (10) seconds of silence.
- This should be completed three (3) times.

3.2.3 Company responsibilities:

- All personnel operating on the fire ground should initiate evacuation procedures if an immediate danger to the safety of personnel exists.
- After initiating the evacuating procedure, give the IC a CAN report.
- Account for your crew and prepare for a PAR.
- A PAR should include your company identifier, number of personnel, and any other pertinent company information.

3.2.4 Command responsibilities:

- Announce any operational changes.
- Confirm a PAR for the entire incident.

3.3 Mayday

3.3.1 Criteria for calling a mayday:

- Lost, disorientated, or unaccounted for crew member
- SCBA malfunction or large loss of air
- Trapped or entangled firefighter
- Seriously injured or incapacitated firefighter
- Any life-threatening condition that cannot be resolved in 30 seconds

3.3.2 Firefighter's responsibilities:

- Attempt to activate the emergency button on the portable radio.
- Transmit, "Mayday, mayday, mayday."
- If not acknowledged after a couple of seconds, make a second transmission.
- After acknowledgment has been made by the IC, transmit a NUCAN.

3.3.3 Command responsibilities:

- Acknowledge the mayday.
- Gather NUCAN information.
- Initiate rescue operations.
- Announce any operational changes that may include moving fire ground operations to a separate tactical channel.

- Declare a mayday with Fire Dispatch.
- Once a chief officer assumes command, they shall ensure that Tablet Command is utilized.

3.3.3.1 Mayday – First alarm

When mayday is declared, Fire Dispatch will automatically do the following:

- Dispatch 2nd alarm
- Additional radio channels
 - One (1) Command channel
 - Three (3) additional TAC channels
- 10-minute time clock recurring
- Dedicated dispatcher assigned to the command channel
- Chief officer notifications (Ops Chiefs notification of mayday event)

3.3.3.2 Mayday – Second alarm or greater

When mayday is declared, Fire Dispatch will automatically do the following:

- Dispatch additional alarm
- Assign remaining available TAC channels on same bank
- 10-minute time clock recurring
- Dedicated dispatcher assigned to the command channel
- Chief officer notifications (Ops Chiefs notification of mayday event)

3.3.4 Sample radio traffic:

- Firefighter: “Mayday, mayday, mayday.”
- Command: “Command copies the mayday, go ahead with your traffic.”
- Firefighter: “This is Firefighter Jones from Engine 73. I was completing a right-hand search on the second floor and have become disoriented and low on air.”
- Command: “Command copies. Firefighter Jones from Engine 73 is disoriented on the second floor and low on air. Activate your PASS device, stay calm, slow your breathing down, and try to locate an exit.”

3.3.5 Considerations:

- All personnel operating on the fire ground should hold all non-essential radio traffic.
- At the conclusion of the mayday, the IC should transmit an “all clear, resume normal radio traffic.”

SIGNATURES

The undersigned approve the contents of this document.



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SROG - Emergency Communications Procedures


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